

# **ITALIAN CITIES**

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**CECIL FAIRFIELD LAVELL.**

**CHAUTAUQUA  
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LORENZO DE' MEDICI  
c. 1480-1500 Uffizi Gallerie, Florence

# Italian Cities

BY

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MCMV

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## PREFACE

This little book is neither a history of Italy nor a record of travel. It is simply an introduction to the study of a great people. Countries like England or France may doubtless be better approached in some other way. Their history is infinitely more unified and their genius far simpler than that of Italy. Indeed, so far is this true that the effort is seldom made to trace the fortunes and the development of the Italian people as a whole, infinite as has been the time and energy spent on phases of that development, ancient Rome, the Empire, the Papacy, the Renaissance, the modern movement for unification—all of these have had devoted to them a whole literature. Yet innumerable reading and thinking people who would not dream of suggesting that Alfred the Great, John Wyclif, and Alfred Tennyson were not all Englishmen, never realize that Julius Cæsar, Innocent III., Raphael, and Garibaldi were all Italians. In the one case national growth has been so mighty, so uninterrupted, that all the world may see it. In the other case the genius of the race was thrown for centuries into directions other than national development, and missing the thread of continuous political history we lose sight of the real continuity of race and spirit.

In these chapters the attempt is made to introduce the student to the spirit of Italy, past and present. Many pages are, of necessity, simply descriptive, for often a church, a picture, or a statue interprets the message and

life of an age as adequately as a revolution, a battle, or even a book. Many are directly historical. But whether in history or description the effort of the writer throughout is to prepare the reader for the study of any phase of Italian achievement that may be undertaken in future with a larger background, a truer understanding of the unity of Italian history in the broadest sense.

My sole co-worker has been my wife, who has shared my Italian studies throughout in Italy and America, and whose assistance in suggestion, in criticism, and in the actual preparation of the book for the press I wish warmly to acknowledge. The friends who first interested me in the art of Italy, Mr. Edward Howard Griggs, Mr. Earl Barnes, and even more, Mr. John Nolen, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, have been too far away for consultation or direct aid, but I may at least salute them and very heartily acknowledge my debt.

CECIL FAIRFIELD LAVELL.

LEWISTON, MAINE, April 17, 1905.

## INTRODUCTION

You are sitting on the steps of an old Greek temple, looking across a little stretch of grass to a still older one, and thinking. Since that dawn, not many weeks ago, when you saw from your port-hole a mountain rearing its dark mass against the ruddy eastern sky, and knew that it was Vesuvius, you have been gaining your first bewildering impressions of Italy. Naples, odorous and noisy perhaps, but charged with picturesque life,—its bay and its hill, and even its streets, full of glorious color,—has been entirely the Italy of your dreams—joyous, sunny, and quite uncrushed by its too obvious poverty. At Baiae you have had the shock and thrill of your first personal contact with Rome. And now you have come to Pæstum. Before you, in a deserted field carpeted with grass and lovely flowers, stands a Doric temple, raised by Greeks in this Greater Greece<sup>1</sup> before the Parthenon yet crowned the Acropolis of Athens. The bright stucco that once covered the rough, reddish stone is quite gone. There is no roof. Some of the columns are broken, and all are scarred by the weather of twenty-five centuries. There is no bright-colored frieze, and the lizard and the barbarian with like freedom may pass where once stood the image of earth-shaking Poseidon. Yet the scars seem to matter wonderfully little. It is not like an intricate piece of carving or painting, not like Leonardo's

<sup>1</sup> Southern Italy was called in Roman times *Magna Græcia*, Great or Greater Greece. The British Colonies have thus been called in modern times Greater Britain.

ruined masterpiece,<sup>1</sup> where every stain and blotch is a dead loss. Here what is left is of infinitely greater significance than what is gone. The harmony, the simplicity, the perfect lines, the restfulness of all Greek work are still there untouched; the wrinkles and scars only add the quiet pathos of age; and before one's imagination easily rises the perfect temple as it was in its prime.

In some ways, though, it is hard to believe that anything here can be really Greek—that this soil was as truly Hellas to the worshipers in the temple as Argos or Achaia. Greek stones they are—Greek stones bearing witness to Greek builders—and yet, had these worshipers of a Greek god no sons that Greek tradition and the Greek language have vanished so completely? Here, alas, as in Sicily, the race has disappeared. The tongue of Pythagoras and Theocritus has faded from memory long ages ago, and if Balaustion could now tell the story of Alcestis to the descendants of the people of Syracuse, they would listen in ignorant amazement to words that their forefathers spoke in Corinth. Indeed the decline must have begun here quite early. The decay of power in the mother cities, the drying up of the great parent streams of Hellenic life, the corrupting presence of masterful barbarian neighbors, all helped to sap the vitality of the Greek cities of southern Italy. Athens, even though a shadow of her old self, might yet remain a center of light to the world, and Athene might be worshiped in the Parthenon by Greeks and Romans, side by side. But the Italian colonies were too far away. Italy became Rome, and though the Romans might themselves do reverence to the Greek spirit and turn to the study of Homer and

<sup>1</sup> "The Last Supper," at Milan.

Sophocles, yet the impulse came from Corinth and Athens, not from Magna Græcia. Barbarian neighbors and alien soil proved too strong for the cities of Greater Greece, and Poseidon had to look sadly down from his desolate fane over a world that had forgotten him. Greeks and gods are alike ghosts in this quiet plain where once was Poseidonia.

But they were not always ghosts. It is perhaps just as well before going on to study the power and glory of Rome or the ideals and fruits of the Renaissance that you come here to contemplate these remains of a genius as mighty as the Roman, far greater indeed outside of the fields of law and politics, and even more subtle and potent in its message to us of to-day than that of Florence herself. These offshoots in Italy of the Greek race were an anticipation and a symbol of the ages to come. To every generation of Italians for twenty-five hundred years this temple has preached the Greek message of simplicity and harmony. To every generation of the civilized world during the same time have Homer, Sophocles, Thucydides, and Plato been quietly teaching freedom and strength of thought, symmetry and beauty of character, nobility, balance, self-restraint in conduct, calm joyousness and spontaneity in heart and outlook on life. All of us, from the Romans of Cato's day to the Americans of the twentieth century, look back to the Greeks as our teachers.

Yet it is strange and tragic to see how fatally the one great defect of the Hellenic genius, its lack of moral soundness, seems to have corrupted the colonists and Hellenized Italians of Sicily and South Italy. Instead of carrying on the message of their fathers, and expanding it to yet further grandeur, they gradually lost their hold on the great things of life. Instead of the Greek race—so famous and

## Introduction

so brilliant—invigorating and illuminating the Italian spirit and making the stock of Magna Græcia the best in Italy, the people of this southland were weakened and degraded by those who should have taught and inspired them.

Every individual and racial virtue, as the Greeks themselves would have said, has its defect. No one debt of Europe to the Greeks is greater than the debt of individualism—the assertion of human dignity, self-respect, and liberty as against kings or gods.<sup>1</sup> But carry this to excess, and there develops shallow irreverence, insolent unwillingness to bow to either law or wise leader. Next perhaps to the debt of individualism is that of spontaneity, of whole-hearted delight in life as a whole, and in the absolutely free, direct play of thought. “To get rid of one’s ignorance, to see things as they are, and by seeing them as they are, to see them in their beauty, is the simple and attractive ideal which Hellenism holds out before human nature; and from the simplicity and charm of this ideal, Hellenism, and human life in the hands of Hellenism, is invested with a kind of aërial ease, clearness, and radiancy; they are full of what we call sweetness and light.” So Matthew Arnold puts it.<sup>2</sup> “The best man,” says Socrates, “is he who most tries to perfect himself, and the happiest man is he who most feels that he is perfecting himself.” Nothing surely, if it be truly interpreted, could be better. It gives new and inspiring meaning, this Greek attitude to life, to our Lord’s command: “Be ye therefore perfect!” Yet let this free play of mind, this spontaneous joy of life, be superficially understood, let it be divorced from self-

<sup>1</sup> Note the attitude of Achilles, Diomedes or Odysseus to Agamemnon in “Iliad” I., IX., and XIX., and the fearlessness of the Greek hero Diomedes in the presence of the God of War himself in “Iliad” V. Contrast these with the Asiatic attitude of prostration before kings and gods.

<sup>2</sup> “Culture and Anarchy,” p. 116.

restraint, let this “spontaneity of consciousness,” to quote Arnold again, be separated from “strictness of conscience,” and it will become mere destructive licentiousness. If all the Greeks could have been as Sophocles and Socrates; if the Golden Age of Athens could have been perpetual; if the balance, the restraint of the Parthenon and the “*Electra*,”<sup>1</sup> could have sunk deeply and permanently into the Hellenic spirit, then the bright—ineffably bright—flowering of a marvelous race need not have ended so soon. The flowers themselves are happily immortal. But the plant and the roots lost their strength, and not in Italy alone, but over the Mediterranean world, the Greeks bowed, not simply to force, but to a levity, a lightness of soul, an incapacity for discipline, a waywardness, and a sensuality which the prophetic mind of Socrates had foreseen and foretold to those who condemned him to death. · The seeds of destruction were sown and sprouting while Pericles still ruled, while the Parthenon frieze was being chiseled, while the golden words of Æschylus, of Sophocles, of Euripides were floating up from stage to stone seats in the Theatre of Dionysus. There is doom in the history of Thucydides as surely as in the prophecy of Jeremiah. And the full weight of judgment, the inevitable fruit of righteousness scorned, of earnestness mocked, of appetites uncurbed, of moral laws set aside, was seen in Tarentum, in Sybaris, and in the Capua of Hannibal. Greek Italy gave to the stern Romans, not sweetness and light, but a place of relaxation and a theme for contemptuous epigrams.

Even as the Greeks—in the motherland and in the colonies—were setting their faces more and more towards

<sup>1</sup> The “*Electra*” of Sophocles I mean, not of Euripides.

destruction, the little Latin city by the Tiber was training its citizens to the very virtues which would have saved Athens from her fall. Before Philip overthrew the Athenians and Thebans at Mantinea Rome had found herself. Before another century was past the Greek cities of south Italy had been conquered by a people who could not perhaps have adequately judged a tragedy or an ode, or built a Parthenon, but who could make laws *and obey them*, elect consuls *and follow them*, and who, trained to civic virtues in a little city, could in time rule the world. And yet the passing centuries are merciful to the weak, even as they are inexorable to the strong. This Temple of Poseidon stands, while the relics of luxury and degradation have been swept away. The good remains; the evil has vanished. And after all, the stucco that once brightened these columns is not more completely gone than the Temple of Jove or the Circus Maximus; the dust of the Greek builders is not more utterly scattered than that of the legions that conquered Pyrrhus and Hannibal. Conquerors and conquered are alike gone and forgotten. Only that which the world esteems true, good, strong, or beautiful survives the wreck of cities and the fall of empires. You hold in your hand a Greek play; you pore over the commentaries of Cæsar; you sit on the steps of a Greek temple; you pace along with sure step on a Roman road. That which was built on sound foundations has stood the test of time and chance; all else has been washed away. So you are content to take your temple as you take your Plato—thankful for what is here. To you it is the embodiment of all that was worthiest in the Greeks of Italy. If that which was weak in them ultimately destroyed them, yet time has been just, and the good work still stands.

# ITALIAN CITIES

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## CHAPTER I

### FROM NAPLES TO POMPEII

There is one great name that can never be far from the mind of the student who lands in South Italy. In the north the deeds of the Piedmontese and those of Venetians, Lombards and Tuscans overshadow the more distant past. But the South has little of a modern air about it; its greatest memories are those of many centuries ago, and in that distant past, though a Greek temple may bring to you passing thoughts of Magna Græcia, yet back of all is the tremendous name of Rome. Long before you see from your train the long aqueducts that still cross the Campagna, and thunder past hoary walls into the city of Romulus and Cæsar, you feel that you have invaded Roman territory. And it is even true that if it were possible to step from your ship into a veritable street of Rome you would suffer a loss. Of all European cities Rome most needs an introduction, a preparation, a gradual initiation into the spirit of the past that will help you to disentangle the complexity of that most perplexing of historical labyrinths, and that introduction you may obtain very ideally in the country about Naples. There you are surrounded by a most unique and distinctly Italian environment—Italian not present or past, but partaking

in some subtle way of all the centuries. The city streets and the country roads are modern in a sense, doubtless; perhaps even traversed by the ubiquitous trolley car, and yet you easily eliminate the modern features, and the belief constantly presses into your mind that these vistas of landscape, these narrow streets, would not have looked strange to the soldiers of Marius. The ages seem to dissolve here as they do in few other places in the world, and many, many times you have the thrill, on meadow or hill, by ruined wall or smiling bay, that comes of an intimate, direct, personal, and vital contact with ancient Rome. You are not yet conscious of an effort to study what you see. Beauty is everywhere about you and you revel in it. But all unconsciously you are within the mighty shadow, and only by degrees—perhaps only when you are actually walking the streets of Pompeii—do you realize that this lovely country of Campania is the portico of the city of the Cæsars.

It is three weeks now since you landed in Naples, and following the erratic dictates of your own preferences betook yourself, not to an elaborate hotel, but to a half-ruined old palace—the Palazzo Donn' Anna—out on the road to Posilipo.<sup>1</sup> Part of it had been fitted up as a *pension*, and though you had to toilfully climb four flights of marble stairs, yet there were compensations that you valued. From your window you looked out over beautiful ruined walls, covered with ivy and little flowers. From the roof, just one flight higher, you had an exquisite view of the bay and of this marvel-

<sup>1</sup> The northern coast of the Bay of Naples runs out to Cape Posilipo, curves then into the little bay on which Pozzuoli and Baiae stand, and terminates in Cape Miseno. The southern terminus of the Bay is Cape Massa, not far from Sorrento.

ous coast. You could go to the edge and look down on the waves that lapped the foundations of your palace. Far away across the bay Vesuvius sent out every few minutes its puff of black smoke. Away out to sea you could make out the blue, rugged outline of Capri. On the land side rose the hill of Posilipo, once dotted with Roman villas, and now—even without the glamour of associations—a glory of radiant color that was purely Neapolitan. It was a good place, this Palazzo. Moreover, a very modern trolley-car passed the door and transported you at will farther out towards Cape Posilipo or into the city, for the reasonable sum of one penny.

You found Naples a capital place in which to spend some lazy days. Not that you desired to spend much time in the city itself. Every one wishes, of course, to see the famous Aquarium, easily the first in the world, and to stroll in the beautiful shore park, the Villa Nazionale, which so admirably reserves a goodly stretch of the water front for the pleasure and refreshment of the people. And you willingly spent many hours in the Museum among the statues, the Pompeian bronzes, and the faded, fascinating old frescoes. But your chief delight was in the environs of the city, and by the aid of a piratical looking cabman and his ramshackle conveyance you explored the hills above Naples, the country roads, and the Phlegraean Fields, that incomparably lovely country back of Baiae's Bay and over towards Cumæ. It is all so full of associations and full of beauty too. It rather pleased your fancy thus to see the playground of the Romans before seeing Rome herself. To judge Rome wholly by the Forum and the Colosseum would have been, you cannot help feeling, singularly inadequate. Here, though it

would seem strange to some, the great city of your dreams was seldom forgotten. Nowhere is she adequately represented, it is true. Even the shapes of the hills, the basins of the lakes, have been altered by earthquakes since Cæsar's time. And yet you were within the charmed atmosphere, and the occasional relics of Roman buildings were scarcely needed to remind you that you were treading enchanted ground.

Yet it sometimes seemed to you a strange and solemn thing that more has not survived of the actual handiwork of the Romans in this region to which they loved so to come. At Baiæ itself you were struck almost with horror at the completeness of the ruin that time has wrought. Of all the splendor of Rome's favorite pleasure resort nothing is left but three ruined baths. Here the pleasant vices of the later republic and the early Empire swung on without let or hindrance, and here, too, darker crimes came sometimes that made even the careless pleasure-seekers shiver and pause in their mad whirl of dissipation. But the villas that once lined the beach are absolutely gone. As you drove along the road that leads to Pozzuoli you did indeed pass frequent signs of foundations, bits of masonry with criss-crossed lines where the stucco had dropped off. But the fair dwellings and luxurious gardens where Lucullus and Pompey, Cicero and Cæsar, once took their ease and gazed—gossiping and sipping Falernian wine—over the bay that still lies there in unchanged beauty, are utterly destroyed. The best preserved of the great baths, the vaulted structure called the Temple of Venus, is stripped of marble, and its muddy floor is strewn with rubbish, while the sulphur springs that once refreshed the dissipated frames of Claudi and Horatii

now soak away into the soft soil. Hardly would Horace and his Mæcenas recognize their Baiæ now.

Pozzuoli, the old Puteoli, where Paul landed, is near by. It is modern, you suppose, but you could readily believe that its streets and houses are ancient or medieval, and you wondered whether its aspect of to-day was really very different from that of two thousand years ago. You entered your first amphitheater here, and trod in some trepidation the crater of "the little Vesuvius," Solfatara. The solid ground of pumice and lava was only a crust beneath which rolled unguessable terrors, but grass and myrtle and little blue and white flowers grew on every hand and spread up the sides of the crater to the rim, so you were lulled to a sense of security. Yet the fires beneath were not wholly left to speculation. You looked down the throat of a miniature crater blown open by the volcano in a wrathful moment a few months before, and saw mud boiling sullenly six feet below; you peered into caverns from which sulphurous steam rolled without ceasing; you ventured several paces into others that were less repellent, and saw where the Romans in older days used to come for sulphur baths. Bold men indeed thus to venture into the mouth of Hades, so that the exhalations thereof might relieve the pangs of rheumatism!—for the domains of Pluto surely could not be far away. Near by is Lake Avernus, and grottoes innumerable, filled with vapor, give ominous sign that the earth demons who destroyed Pompeii, and who have ever and anon torn asunder parts of these Phlegræan Fields, are still alert and tending their never quenched fires beneath.

The Promontory of Misenum or Miseno as it is called now, terminates the Bay of Naples on the north, and near it

are the ruins—few and meager—of old Misenum, once the most important naval station of the Roman power on this side of Italy. Here the good Admiral Pliny was stationed as commander of the fleet in the year 79 A.D., and from here he observed that dread cloud shaped like an Italian pine that portended the destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii. His nephew, who was with him at the time, tells us all about it. He did not go with his uncle when the admiral, like a true Roman, hastened across the bay in his galley to the succor of friends in danger, but remained in Misenum deep in his studies. It was only when the tumult of eruption and earthquake made even Misenum a place of danger and terror, that the young man and his mother took to their chariots and sought to flee from the terrible mountain. The scene that he describes on the road as they left the town must have been repeated in far more dreadful forms in many places on the other side of the bay, that awful night and morning. “The ashes now began,” he narrates, “to fall upon us, though in no great quantity. I turned my head, and observed behind us a thick smoke, which came rolling after us like a torrent. I proposed, while we had yet any light, to turn out of the highroad, lest my mother should be pressed to death in the dark by the crowd that followed us. We had scarce stepped out of the path when darkness overspread us, not like that of a cloudy night, or when there is no moon, but of a room when it is shut up and all the lights extinct. Nothing then was to be heard but the shrieks of women, the screams of children, and the cries of men; some calling for their children, others for their parents, others for their husbands, and only distinguishing each other by their voices; one lamenting his

own fate, another that of his family; some wishing to die from the very fear of dying; some lifting their hands to the gods; but the greater part imagining that the last and eternal night was come, which was to destroy the gods and the world together." Yet the darkness lifted. Misenum, though strewn with ashes and cinders, was spared. Those who had fled returned to their homes, with only this fearsome glimpse of the tenfold greater horror that had fallen upon the cities lying nearer the mountain. The old Roman admiral died, overcome by noxious gases, near Castellamare, and Herculaneum and Pompeii were blotted out. And now two thousand years after, you stood there by the pleasant shore, looking across the blue waters to the great mountain with its tuft of black smoke, and thinking of the brave old Roman scholar and sailor who once sailed valiantly across those waters into darkness and showers of ashes.

Three weeks have passed, and you are in La Cava. As you sit in your comfortable room and let your thoughts drift back to Baiae and Misenum, you feel a thrill of something like excitement as you realize that to-morrow you will be in Pompeii. To-day in Paestum your thoughts have been of things Greek. But now as you bring back those enchanting days in which you first came into contact with Rome, when you tried to imagine every stalwart guide or peasant in the armor of a legionary, when you tried to reconstruct imperial villas on broken, scarcely visible, foundations, when you tried to restore from dingy vaults and lovely bay the gay life of Baiae, and from broken piers and heaps of rubble the great moles where Roman fleets were moored—as you bring back those first days in Italy, you feel that now you are to take your second step, not

to Rome just yet, Rome is still too complicated and bewildering, but to an authentic bit of an old Roman city, more Roman than Rome herself.

So you sleep, and rise, and bid farewell to your plump little German hostess, and in due time board the funny little toy train for Pompeii. The station-master calls his sonorous "Partenza!" and toots his whistle; you move off at a speed which you could not possibly equal on foot or even behind fairly good horses; and soon, after an uneventful journey, you hear the guard call the familiar, world-famous name, and get out at a neat little station. You look about you expectantly for ruins. But there is only a quiet green country, with Vesuvius a little distance away to the north and more mountains south and southwest towards Castellamare. A broad roadway leads up to a modern yellow hotel. Here you fortify yourself with some lunch, and they point you to a place a stone's throw away to which you obediently turn your steps, marveling greatly. Still no ruins. Only a gentle elevation before you, cleft by a little depression where you find an office. You buy a ticket of admission—which includes an official guide—and you walk up a path, with lovely green and flowered banks sloping up on each side, show your ticket at another gate, and go on up another path—green and beautiful. Then there is a tunnel-like archway beneath which you walk up a steep little slope, and all at once you are standing on a pavement that was laid two thousand years ago, with a street lying before you that was thronged with people when Cæsar died and when Christ was born, and houses on either side that have been dead and tenantless since the building of the Colosseum.

For an hour or so you follow your guide and get all

you can out of him. He has the keys without which you could not get at some of the most interesting corners in Pompeii. But there comes a time when his usefulness ceases to be a sufficient offset to the disturbance and irritation which even the most obliging official conductor must cause you in such a place. You dismiss him with thanks, some small moneys, and polite lifting of the hat, and you turn to your own devices. Up a narrow little street you walk until you come to a door into an old garden surrounded by a low stone wall. You turn in and sit down on a grassy little mound to untangle the crowd of impressions and let the atmosphere of the old city sink into your spirit in silence.

It is a wonderfully peaceful little nook that you have found. You thought of it as a garden when you entered because it is so beautifully carpeted with grass and poppies and wee blue flowers; and yet the bits of foundations, the shape of the place, and the pathetically forsaken looking little shrine in one corner make you think that the stone walls must once have been roofed. Here where you are sitting on a little mound with a scarlet poppy nodding by your foot and a green lizard looking at you from a crevice in the old wall, a Pompeian may have been cooking or eating larks' tongues, or contentedly reading his "Virgil," or dreaming on his couch, nineteen hundred long years ago. You are not archeologist enough to decide very certainly which part of the house you are in. You only know that now it is roofless and ruined with only the little niche where an image of a god once stood to mutely tell you of the warm human life that was there until the volcano choked it into silence. Just over the wall is a space they call the Triangular Forum with ruins

of columns that were raised before the Parthenon was built—the oldest remains in the city. And across it you see the high walls and portico of the Tragic Theater. You were in there ten minutes ago, sitting in one of the old stone seats and trying to imagine your favorite tragedy being played down in the space below. You were wishing then as you passed through the empty spaces and looked curiously out over the barracks and exercise ground of the gladiators behind the stage, that you could know what tragedy was played there last. A fleeting vision of a bright-robed chorus came to you, and with it a sad little echo of one of Sophocles' odes—"Not to be born is best, and next in happiness is the lot of him who dies in childhood." Perhaps they did not play the Greek tragedies here after all, and yet surely Ennius and his fellows would scarcely have contented so cultivated a people here in this semi-Greek land. How far these gay Pompeians could enter into the real spirit of the Attic tragedies may be doubted perhaps. Certainly they would not have the fine delicacy of Athenian taste. Yet they doubtless appreciated them much as you yourself appreciate German operas, perhaps in their reverence for things Greek even more so. Those stone seats in which you may now sit and meditate in quiet, no doubt often held serious enough auditors two thousand years ago, and you may lean forward as they did many a time to catch the gestures and the cadence of stately dance and ode. So much of the building is left in perfect condition that it is easily filled for you with the color and life of the older times. And you murmured to yourself, almost as you would in those other far more sacred seats on the slopes of the Acropolis:



CIVIC FORUM, POMPEII



‘Then what golden hours were for us!  
    While we sate together there;  
How the white vests of the chorus  
    Seemed to wave up a live air!  
How the cothurns trod majestic  
    Down the deep iambic lines;  
And the rolling anapestic  
    Curled, like vapor over shrines!

“Oh our Æschylus, the thunderous!  
    How he drove the bolted breath  
Through the cloud to wedge it ponderous  
    In the gnarlèd oak beneath.  
Oh our Sophocles, the royal,  
    Who was born to monarch’s place—  
And who made the whole world loyal,  
    Less by kingly power than grace.

“Our Euripides, the human—  
    With his droppings of warm tears;  
And his touches of things common,  
    Till they rose to touch the spheres!”

The bits of the city that you have found it hardest to reconstruct for yourself have been the ones you have seen most often in pictures—the civic Forum and the temples. As you walked through them with your guide it was almost impossible for your imagination—unfortified by archeological learning—to complete the broken columns, to roof over the shattered temples, to replace the statues on the empty pedestals, and to fill all with the busy life of a Roman city. If only you could have brought back from the great museum at Naples all the statues and pictures which have been taken there for preservation you could do better, perhaps. You saw them there of course, and you dimly remember one series of frescoes representing the life of the Forum, but walking about the corridors and

rooms of a museum, looking at faded frescoes and bronzes and marbles—duly mounted and numbered—is not like seeing them in place. There in Naples you politely gazed at each one, saw that this one was beautiful, that one well preserved, this other one woefully faded—and finally went away tired, but triumphantly conscious of duty done, with a chaotic mass of impressions in your mind that you scarcely dreamed of reducing to order. Indeed the best intentions in the world would have been baffled by the problem. These statues and frescoes once adorned the temples, the atria, the gardens, the dining-rooms of cultured gentlemen of the age of Augustus or Titus. When they were removed from their setting, half of their beauty and all of their meaning—their decorative effectiveness—were taken away.

So as you meditate in your garden your memory halts very briefly at the impressive ruins of the Forum and the temples. You have really found more that interested you in the streets and houses. For here the echo of the old life is astonishingly real. The narrow little streets are most unmistakably *streets*, and you almost felt as you walked along them that curious Roman eyes might be watching you from the little windows,—that stately shades in purple-edged robes might be strolling on the other side of the road, scornfully eyeing you, barbarous Anglo-Saxon that you are. But meanwhile you in your new-world lordliness were marveling at the narrowness and lack of color in these Pompeian streets. Even the broadest cannot be much more than twenty-five feet wide,—just room enough for two chariots to pass abreast after you take off space for the narrow sidewalks,—and you remember only three of these spacious highways altogether. The rest

are surely no more than nine or ten feet wide, a few perhaps twelve or fifteen, and when you have allowed for a narrow walk or curbstone on each side, there is only space enough for one chariot to go along the roadway. So restrained was its course, indeed, that the solid lava blocks in the pavement show still the deep ruts of the wheels. You saw another thing, too, which helped to bring home to you the almost uncanny reality and humanity of it all. The line of curbstones on each side is often a foot or a foot and a half high. So that in time of heavy rain, the roadway would become a rushing stream, hemmed in by banks and floor of stone. To provide for the comfort of pedestrians therefore, the thoughtful authorities placed broad stepping-stones, one or more as the breadth of the street demanded, arranged so that the wheels of a vehicle could pass nicely on either side. You stood and noted the smoothness of the stones, where the sandals of bygone ages had worn them, and as you looked with a kind of shiver over the worn edge of a fountain, rubbed smooth by hands that might have touched Cæsar's, you saw the lead pipes that carried pure water through streets and houses till the ashes fell in their withering rain and the fountains bubbled no more.

But you were half-protesting against the grayness of it all. Stone was everywhere. Relentless pavement filled the streets, and the stone walls of the houses rose straight from the edge of the sidewalk. You will chafe at this many a time in the months to come, for it is as characteristic of modern as of ancient Italy. But you found before long where the Pompeian looked for his color and for the flowers and green that would relieve his eye from the glare of sun on stone. For you turned into a door—one of the

doors that your guide had to unlock—and found an exquisite little Roman house lying before you. Vaguely you remembered in school-days having heard of the atrium of an ancient house, but you never had really imagined vividly what the word could mean. Well, one was before you now. You were standing in a little vestibule, and before you lay a wide hall. Several little rooms,—conceivably sleeping-rooms, though small to your eye,—opened from this hall, but they scarcely interested you as much as the atrium itself. It was evidently the room into which any one who passed the threshold entered at once, the general utility room, the reception-room for casual or business callers, the more public, less personal part of the house. In the middle of the floor you saw a square basin, and over it an opening in the roof that admitted rain, air, and light. Beyond, through a hallway closed once by draperies, your eye met the welcome rest of green. You moved forward to it eagerly, passed between two pillars, and instinct told you that the lovely little retreat you were entering was the part of the little house where only the family and friends were admitted. A gentleman named Aulus Vettius lived here, they say, and indeed you were inclined to envy him.

You were standing in the peristyle of the house—an open colonnade surrounding a beautiful little garden. Exquisite little statues stood on pedestals here and there, flowers and shrubs raised their heads to the open sky, and in the rooms opening upon the colonnade and garden you found frescoes that seemed to you both better preserved and infinitely more interesting than any you saw at Naples. One room particularly delighted you. It was adorned on all sides with paintings, but your eye especially fell on black bands nine inches high encircling the walls in which

were painted in bright harmonious joyous colors exquisite little Cupids and Psyches doing all manner of things—gathering flowers, making and selling oil, selling garlands of roses, playing games, working in metals, making cloth, gathering grapes and toiling at the wine-press, racing in the games of the circus with antelopes for horses—a glowing series of lovely shapes and colors, quaint and beautiful beyond belief. You turned from them to the panels, sparkling with dainty flying and dancing forms, and you stood in amazement. You came to Pompeii expecting ruins. You found them, certainly, but you found far more—a city forsaken and silent, but filled with eloquent voices that made the ancient past as yesterday, with brilliant shapes of beauty, graceful columns inclosing flowers and entwined by ivy, figures in marble and bronze and rosy frescoes that seemed to smile in vivid life at you as they danced and played in their deathless youth.

It is all fresh in your mind as you sit there in the garden by the little old shrine. And after you have pondered over it, you go out to stroll about and explore for yourself. Each open door you come to you enter and you take an unexpected pleasure in comparing different houses, noting the varying shape of the atrium, and the number and size of the smaller rooms. You always look with especial interest for the peristyle with its garden, and you soon find that some householders were not able to afford one, that others had only one side adorned with a colonnade, and that still others had not only the complete peristyle, but an additional garden beyond at one side. In these open houses you do not find any frescoes that compare with those in the house of Vettius, and yet even the faded ones that you come upon are interesting,

and now and then on a wall you find a graceful head or an airy flying figure whose beauty penetrates even through the faded tints and defacing blotches. Some windows that you pass lead into darkness that you hesitate to penetrate, so damp and uninviting are they within, but you lean in and pluck a little flower or maidenhair fern to send home. Up and down the quiet streets you wander aimlessly, thinking of Glaucus, whose house, one of the first you visited, you think you understand better than when you first read the "Last Days," and of blind Nydia and Sallust and old Pansa, but even more of the busy everyday life that once enlivened the streets, and of the men and women who slept in those narrow cells or reclined in cool luxury in the shadow of some white peristyle. You are walking in Roman streets, looking at Roman houses; it is Rome itself in miniature, not simply the insignificant provincial city of Pompeii. The touch of Vesuvius, which to so many was the blast of destruction, was, after all, a preserving hand, spread over this bit of the older world and lifted in our own day to give us one more glimpse of the life of the past. The Imperial City herself has vanished. Only a few columns and arches and brick walls show us the city of the Cæsars. But as you walk along the broadest street in Pompeii—the street of Mercury—and pass under the Arch of Caligula, and stroll along through the Forum, and look up and down the narrow streets with their lines of gray silent houses, you catch your breath as you think what it all means. It is a vision of a city that died and was buried while St. John the Divine still walked the earth, while the helmets of the Roman legions were newly gleaming in the streets of Jerusalem and on the moors of Britain, over eighteen hundred years ago.

## CHAPTER II

### ANCIENT ROME

If you could have your own way you would approach Rome by the Via Appia, in a carriage that you could fancy was a chariot, with the echo in your brain of the tramp of armed legions behind you. But alas for the reality of things! You will probably enter by train, and as you leave the station, the piazza and gardens before you, the modern Via Nazionale that you swing into a moment later, have little semblance to the Rome of your dreams. And you might look long for the Rome of your dreams without finding it, so choked and hidden is it by the bustle and noise and insistent commercial presence of the Rome of yesterday. For Rome is bewildering. Her riddle is not to be read in one day or in three. The spirits of dead emperors do not greet you in the rattling thoroughfare. The quiet voices of the past, voices even that all the world once listened to, do not compete with the strident shouts of cabmen and vendors. You must wait until the noise ceases or is as nothing to you, and then, perhaps, if you come to the old city with a mind cleared of vain shadows, and listen in reverence and patience, there may appear to you her ancient sons, Scipio and Cæsar, the gentle Virgil and the grave Lucretius, and those men—consuls, emperors, and popes—who can murmur to you tales of Rome the Eternal.

Shocking and philistine as it sounds, a very ideal way in which to approach Rome would be by balloon.

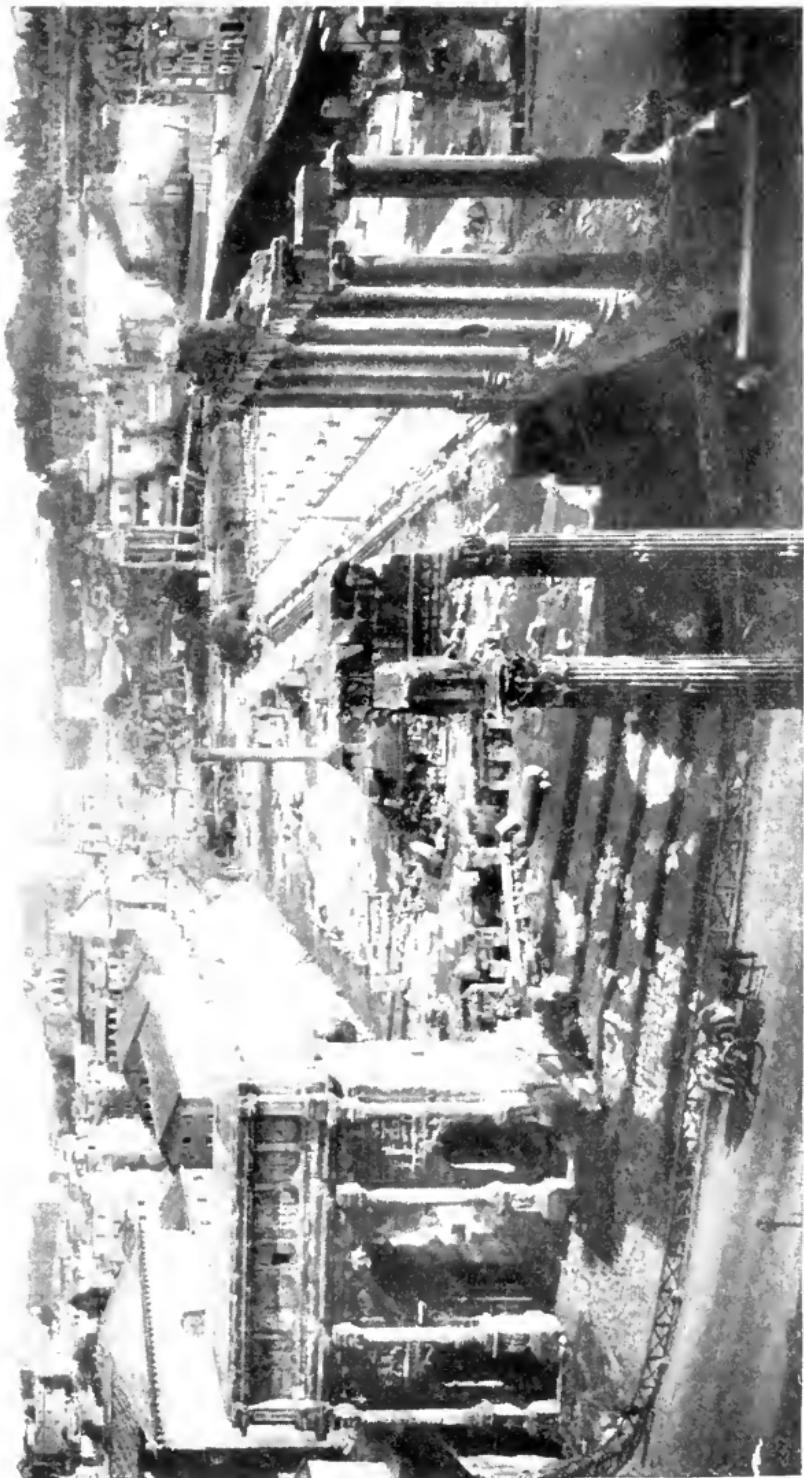
You are floating along, let us say, high above the highest trees and towers, sailing with a light breeze down the course of the Tiber. Before and below you lies the city. Towering to the right, quite near you, rises the great dome of St. Peters, and not far from it on the river bank you see the round tomb of Hadrian, the castle above which a destroying angel once sheathed his sword at the prayer of a pope.<sup>1</sup> Nearer you, on the left bank of the river, you see a city gate—the Porta del Popolo—and inside it a piazza from which three streets run off into the heart of the city. The central one is the Corso Umberto, very nearly the old Via Flaminia, and your eye follows it until it is lost in a labyrinth of houses in the distance. Then your gaze goes on, leaps over the tangled mass of buildings and streets, and catches a glimpse of a great pile which must surely be the Colosseum. From your lofty eyrie you can see Rome as an eagle might see it,—not the city of Tarquin and Coriolanus, but the Rome of the emperors and popes, with the Hill of Gardens, the Pincian, just inside the wall, and the city sweeping on before you over the old plain of the Campus Martius by the river and over the higher ground of the Quirinal Hill. Then as your airy ship moves on over all this later city, you distinguish those other hills which were for so many centuries as holy ground to the rulers of the world—the Capitoline and the Palatine, which with the Esquiline looked down upon the heart of ancient Rome.

Now you can let the rest of the city go. St. Peter's, the Pincian Hill, and the Corso gave you your bearings for the part of Rome that lies from the Quirinal towards the Porta del Popolo and the Vatican. Your eye caught

<sup>1</sup> Hence called the Castle of the Holy Angel, St. Angelo.



THE ROMAN FORUM  
Looking towards the Palatine and the Curia



the royal palace of Victor Emmanuel as you passed over the Quirinal itself. But now these are all put behind you. Modern Rome, even Papal Rome, is as if it were not, and you take your stand on solid earth at last on the summit of the Palatine.

Before you lies one of the most famous bits of ground in the whole world, covered with appalling ruin. Here are broken walls about a court, the house of the vestal virgins; just to the left three lonely columns, the Temple of Castor; further to the left under the shadow of the Capitoline, more groups of stately, ruined columns, the Temples of Saturn and Vespasian; a great paved space with rows of broken stumps of columns, the Julian Basilica, built by Cæsar himself, to relieve the main Forum from some of its congestion; everywhere mounds of bricks, crumbling walls, marble slabs, footworn paving-stones—pathetic relics of departed glory! Just a little way to your left is the Capitoline Hill, where once gleamed the golden roof of the Temple of Jove. Just across from you is the low elevation of the Esquiline. Only a few minutes' walk to your right is the sullen mass of the Colosseum. It is all real enough, and yet your imagination is grappling with a hard task. To rebuild the palaces from the crumbling brick walls, to bid the lonely columns, standing there like skeleton sentries watching over the dead, spring once more into shapely temples; to sweep away the heaps of broken brick and stone and replace them with statues and stately walls, and then to see in your mind's eye the pulse of the world beating here, the color, the roar, and splendor of a capital that once ruled land and sea from the Cheviot Hills to the Euphrates,—this is the task that dazes you. Yet if it is only ruin to

you, if you only look at it curiously with the superficial interest and momentary awe of the sight-seer, then it is not Rome. Some ruins are beautiful in themselves. These are not. They are simply all that the storms of centuries have left of the heart of a very great city, and we do not get their message of pathos and disaster unless we try to see the life and beauty and power that once were there.

Fifteen hundred years ago, the last of the Roman poets, singing the praises of Honorius, stood here by the Imperial Palace on the Palatine and saw the Queen of the World, old and tottering to her fall, but still proud and glittering with the pomp of Empire.

“Here power itself is prouder, feels the thrill  
Supreme of dominion. Here the palace lifts  
Its haughty head aloft and sees the shrines,  
Stern outposts of the gods, ranged there below  
A circling band of heavenly sentinels;  
And yonder ’neath the Thunderer’s altars hang  
The giants to the rock Tarpeian. There  
Are seen the gleaming doors, the lofty fanes  
That fill the narrow air, o’ertopped with forms  
That seem to fly into the enfolding clouds,  
The rostral columns clad with prows of ships,  
The stately walls and towers that men have raised  
On high as if to lift the hills themselves  
Nearer to heaven. And there, spanning the way,  
Arches innumerable glittering with spoils  
Dazzle the eye, that turns amazed and hurt  
From the gold, the gleam, the splendor, which is Rome.”<sup>1</sup>

This was in the later empire, nine hundred years after the indignant patricians had expelled from Rome the royal race of the Tarquins, and nearly eight hundred years since a foreign invader had set foot within the city walls.

<sup>1</sup> Claudian, “Panegyric on the Sixth Consulship of Honorius.”

Now let us close our eyes and try to bring back that tremendous drama of the making of Rome.

You look through the thick mist of centuries and see the clouds part for a moment at the year 500 before the coming of Christ. Rome is only a little city on the Tiber, clustered about its citadel on the Capitoline, with hostile enemies within a half-day's walk of her gates. She is a republic, and yet comparatively few of those whom you see walking her streets or trading in her markets or fighting her battles have any share in her government. Many of these traders and fighters are of the plebs—outsiders who have drifted in after the founding of the city—or freed slaves, or dependents of one kind or another, all constituting a large proportion of the residents of the city, sometimes a wealthy and intelligent element too. The prouder groups that you see gathering to their assemblies in the Comitium across the Forum are the only true citizens of Rome. They are the patricians, and they alone bear the title of "Roman People." Among them you may see Caius Marcius Coriolanus, who is to be immortalized two thousand years later by a descendant of savage Germans, and Marcus Junius Brutus, who had led the revolt against the kings nine years before, and who was further to become the type for all time of the savage sternness of the Roman conception of law by condemning his own sons to death for disobeying orders. It would be hard to find a Greek doing that, outside of Sparta at any rate, and if you could find such a case it would not be typical, but exceptional. What harmony, grace, mental fearlessness were to a Greek, obedience and law were to a Roman, and the contrast between the two races was a radical one.

The mists close over this Rome of 500 B.C., and rise again a century later. It is still only a city, larger, but still facing a strong Etruria on the north across the Tiber, with Latin cities all about her and warlike Samnites a little distance away, and with rumors reaching her of fierce Gauls far north, above Etruria. But if there is little outward expansion there is a vital inward change. The patricians no longer have the monopoly of citizenship, of the proud name of Roman People. The outsiders, the plebs, cannot hold office yet in the republic, it is true, but they have obtained written laws, they have the right of voting on every matter affecting the public weal, of accepting or refusing laws, of electing magistrates, and of intermarriage with patricians.<sup>1</sup> And in addition to all this, they have a spokesman, an elected leader, whose person is sacred—the Tribune of the Plebs—to whom the patricians have conceded the power of annulling any act or law deemed injurious to the people by one word, “*Veto*,” “I forbid it.” Rome is almost a democracy.

Once more a century passes. It is the year 300 B.C., and we look again. The city has passed through perilous times since our last view. The fourth century was hardly begun when a horde of wild Gauls swept down from the north, broke the strength of Etruria, annihilated the forces of Rome at the river Allia, entered and sacked the city, and would have captured the citadel itself—the capitol—had not the stealthy night climbers startled a flock of geese whose cackling awoke a valiant officer, Marcus Manlius, and saved Rome. But the terrible tide of bar-

<sup>1</sup> This side of Roman development is most luminously traced by Warde Fowler in his little “City State of the Greeks and Romans.” The facts are also given clearly and accurately in the histories of Rome by Shuckburgh and Botstorf.

barians was turned back, and the struggle for internal harmony went on until all the distinction between patrician and plebeian was done away with. Democracy was definitely achieved in 367 B.C., or perhaps more safely still by 340 B.C., two years before Philip of Macedon was to defeat the Athenians and Thebans on the field of Chæroneia. So, as we look down on the city now we see a democracy—and an expanding power. Rome had often before had to wage desperate war against her neighbors, and she may even have risen to be the chief city in a Latin confederacy. But after four hundred years since her foundation,<sup>1</sup> and more than one hundred and fifty since the expulsion of the kings, she had remained only a city after all, influential and feared perhaps, and known to have hard-fighting and well-disciplined citizen-soldiers, but still only one of the central Italian city-states. Now the attainment of democracy seemed to mean an impulse to a new, aggressive vigor. During the last thirty or forty years of this fourth century, while Alexander and his generals were turning Asia upside down, Rome turned swiftly against one enemy after another, and as the century closes we see her no longer a colleague of the Latins, but their chief, and a power whose rapidly rising greatness is about to provoke a combination of the strongest states in Italy against her—Etruscans, Umbrians, and Samnites.

So we almost expect what we shall see when the mist rises at the close of the third century and shows us Rome in the year 200 B.C. It has been a tremendous century. The combined powers of Italy have been crushed; a formidable invader, Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, kinsman to the

<sup>1</sup> I assume here for convenience that Rome was founded in 753 B.C.—the traditional date—and the kings expelled in 509 B.C.

great Alexander, has been met and hurled back; Carthage, the great Phoenician city-state, ruler of the seas, daughter of Tyre, mistress of the Mediterranean trade, has been fought and beaten in two terrible duels. One of the greatest generals of whom history knows, after bringing Rome to deadly peril, and defeating her armies again and again, has been at last worn out and crushed, and all the prestige and influence of Carthage has passed to her conqueror, with Sicily, the islands of the western Mediterranean, and much of Spain. Rome is become the chief power of the Mediterranean world, with only Macedon, Syria, and Egypt as possible rivals.

It is the middle century of the five of republican Rome. The first two, from 500 to 300, are chiefly interesting from the point of view of internal development. Rome was then growing to mature statehood, developing her individuality, learning the arts of war and citizenship. The last two, from 200 B.C. to the establishment of the Empire at the beginning of our era, were centuries during which Rome was unquestionably the chief power in the Mediterranean world, steadily rising to absolute mastery. The turning-point in her career falls in that middle century of the five—300 to 200—the century that contains the conquest of central and southern Italy, the repulse of Pyrrhus, the life and death struggle with Carthage,<sup>1</sup> the rise of Rome as a naval and commercial state, and the passing of the governing power from the democracy to the Senate. You may grow to feel a certain dread and repulsion at this third-century Rome, with her fierce

<sup>1</sup>A most interesting account of the war with Carthage is contained in R. Bosworth Smith's "Carthage and the Carthaginians" or his "Rome and Carthage," in the Epochs of Ancient History series. Those who wish a true, but by no means attractive account of life in Carthage may find it in Flaubert's interesting but terrible novel, "Salânimbo."

energy, her merciless determination, her refusal to loosen her grip on an enemy until she has shaken out his life. You may see with horror, and even disgust, the cold, pitiless stamp with which she tramples the power to do further mischief out of a conquered foe. But it is not easy to refuse admiration. Terrible as she was, unlovable as she was, she was unquestionably great. Struck down in two great defeats by Pyrrhus and asked by him on what terms the Romans would make peace, they showed their claim to empire by their answer—that the Romans would make no terms with an enemy on Italian soil. Well might the impressed envoy assure his master that the Roman Senate seemed an assembly of kings. And there is a distinct greatness in the consul's announcement to the people after the great defeat at Lake Trasimenus at the hands of Hannibal, "Romans, we have lost a great battle; our army is cut to pieces and Flaminus the consul is slain. Think, therefore, what is to be done for your safety." One expects so straightforward a proclamation to be worthily answered. A people who can hear such tidings—not unmoved, assuredly, but unterrified—can surely deliberate on it wisely. Our sympathies may be with Hannibal in that struggle, but if so it is because our hearts go out instinctively to a brave leader fighting so gallant a battle against a giant power, not because the better cause did not win. The victory of Carthage would have meant the supremacy of a Phoenician state, shrewd, ingenious, skilled in commerce, but cruel, hard, intolerant, with a degrading and brutal religion, and with no contribution to the Europe of the future but a pitiless commercial tyranny. No Roman general was produced in that struggle who at all equals Hannibal in the judgment of posterity. It

was not brilliant generalship that foiled his best efforts; it was stubborn courage, refusal to yield, and the pouring forth of valiant soldiers and steady, proud, resourceful commanders that wore him out.

Indeed it is a curious and significant thing that during the whole rise of Rome to supremacy we are not greatly impressed by any single man, none to compare with this one enemy, Hannibal, in picturesqueness, gallantry, boldness of enterprise, and all-round genius. Back in the more legendary days there are some figures who stand immortalized by one deed as peculiarly Roman types—Brutus and Coriolanus, Horatius, who kept the bridge, Virginius, Camillus, the conqueror of Veii and of the Gauls, Cincinnatus, and a few others; but during the long struggle for democracy and the achievement of Mediterranean supremacy, no one man rose to more than a tolerable or a momentary height. Many brave and wise leaders there were,<sup>1</sup> but none of pre-eminent boldness or genius. This remains true in the second century, through the conquests of Macedonia, Greece, and Syria, until we reach a strikingly important year, the fateful year 133 B.C. In that year the conquest of Spain was completed by the fall of Numantia. In that year the kingdom of Pergamus in Asia Minor was bequeathed to Rome and accepted by her—her first province in Asia. And in that year Tiberius Gracchus was Tribune of the Plebs.

<sup>1</sup> To really get at a conception of what was meant in the second and third centuries by a good Roman, one might read Plutarch's "Æmilius Paulus." Or take this little bit from his "Cato":

"As soon as the dawn of understanding appeared, Cato took upon himself the office of schoolmaster to his son. . . . He taught him not only how to throw a dart, to fight hand to hand, and to ride, but to box, to endure heat and cold, and to swim in the roughest and most rapid parts of the river. He wrote histories for him, he further acquaints us, with his own hand, in large characters, so that without stirring out of his father's house he might gain a knowledge of the illustrious actions of the ancient Romans, and of the customs of his country."

Up to this year one's attention is absorbed by the marvelous sweep of conquest. It is easy at the first glance to lose track of the internal changes of the same period until we come to this year 133, and find one of the ablest and noblest of the Romans using his official position as spokesman and protector of the people to passionately advocate reform. His stern warnings are of no small evils, but of diseases that are consuming the life-blood of the Roman people. He denounces the creation of an official oligarchy, the destruction of the middle class by the enormous wealth of the Senators and their families, the destruction of the working-classes by the extension of slavery, the increase of vice and corruption with the increase of power and wealth. All these, he cries, must be remedied by radical surgery—the great estates must be cut up, the power restored to the people. But, you say, how is this? Did we not see the achievement of democracy two hundred years before the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus,—before ever the career of conquest was fairly started. Just so, but one of the most interesting features of that conquest to us is the way in which it was taken by the people of Rome. They had, in fact, found it quite impossible to deal in full assembly with the intricate problems of foreign affairs, provincial government, and the conduct of wars. The Athenians had found it difficult, too, in the fifth century, but they had confidently continued the attempt without fear until they were ruined. The Roman, on the other hand, had too great an instinct for effectiveness, too little interest in theoretical equality and individual share in government to care to do work badly which a smaller group could do well. There was a little council which everybody respected, an ancient advisory

and judicial body, called the Senate (*senex*, old), the Council of Elders. It was not elected by the people, but was chosen by grave and wise men, the censors, who were; and it was the custom of these censors in trying to select the wisest men in Rome to choose first those who had held responsible offices. You could therefore rely on finding in the Senate every ex-consul and ex-prætor in Rome, every general and statesman of approved experience and wisdom. What body could be better fitted to advise the people?

It is without doubt one of the most instructive and interesting lessons in the whole field of constitutional study to watch the slow change of the Senate from an advisory council to the sovereign ruler of the Roman dominions. The people were willing enough. They saw that the work was done well. They reaped the fruit in splendid shows, in freedom from taxation, in frequent free donations of corn, and in the pride of being Romans, rulers of the world. The energy of the more restless and ambitious was easily turned into war or even politics, for if the Senate was a virtual oligarchy, and a conservative one, it was never too exclusive. It is true, the Senators kept the prizes of politics and war in their own families if possible. The son of a consul was always preferred to a new man. In some families—just as with the Russells, the Cavendishes, the Cecils in England—a political career was considered the obvious one, and the consulship the natural and simple goal of ambition. But if an outsider wished to take part in the glory and labor of governing, he had only to show his ability and energy to rank in time with the best of them. Cicero was a new man, yet once when he was exiled the Senators wore mourning until he

was recalled. But the fact remained that power centered more and more in the senatorial class, and the people as a whole, content to follow their leaders, lost bit by bit both instinct and desire for self-government. So the wealth of the world poured in to pauperize them, slaves came by thousands from captured cities to do the work of Italy and degrade labor, and Rome definitely became an oligarchy, built on slavery and maintained through the degradation of the people.

It was against this tendency of the times that Tiberius Gracchus hurled himself. But while he carried his laws he made enemies, naturally, of the most powerful men in Rome, and he had no sooner laid down his office than he was murdered, deserted by the fickle populace. His brother took up the battle ten years later, carried all before him for a time, and backed by momentary popularity checked the enraged Senate for two years. But then he too lost his grip, and was murdered. Things went now from bad to worse for the next fifteen years. The Senate was becoming morally as degenerate and unworthy as the degraded populace. The affairs of Rome looked gloomy indeed as this second century before our era neared its close. Rome's enemies could buy her rulers as Philip had bought the Greeks two centuries before. And the Gracchi had set a dangerous and significant example. They had failed simply because when the fickle, ill-organized force of the people fell away from them, they had nothing to oppose to the disciplined, experienced ranks of the Senate. Suppose then a man should arise who should possess the votes of the people and an army too.

Only a few years before the close of the second cen-

tury arose a soldier of the people named Marius. A war that the corrupt Senate had been dragging out for years with the Numidian king, Jugurtha, Marius settled sternly and permanently in one campaign. A terrible danger threatened from the north. Hordes of barbarians, huge, fierce, and savage, were descending from the Alps, from the mountains and forests of Germany, upon the fertile plains of Gaul and Italy. Consuls and armies who sought to check them were cut to pieces. Marius was looked to as the only hope of Rome. Two years he took to train his army, the people maintaining him in the consulship in spite of the Senate, and then in two great battles he fell upon the barbarians and annihilated them. Seven times was Marius consul. The old weapons of the Senate were powerless against such a man. They needed a champion, and there arose Sulla. Sulla had been a lieutenant of Marius in his wars, was a brilliant soldier, and an aristocrat. So these two locked in mortal conflict. For the first twenty years of the last century before Christ the figures of Marius and Sulla almost fill the canvas. The destinies of Rome seem to be in the hands of two men, and the old system is breaking up no matter who wins. Marius may nominally represent the popular cause and Sulla the senatorial, but actually each is fighting for his own hand. Each by turn leads armies against Rome and holds tyranny there. The name of liberty is become a laughing-stock and a mockery. The evil is too deep-rooted to be cured even by the death of both rivals. Marius leaves behind him a young kinsman, Julius Cæsar —Sulla a trusted lieutenant, Pompey. As Pompey, the older of the two, rises to greatness, he seems to preserve loyalty to the Senate, and there is even friendship between

him and Cæsar. But at last the poor pretense is cast aside. The rift comes between them. Pompey, nominally chief of the senatorial party, and Cæsar, nominally successor to Marius, fly at each other's throats, and Cæsar's victory leaves him master of the world. The wars and the Empire had killed the democracy and created the rule of the Senate; corruption and pride of place had ruined the Senate; and there remained nothing but individual leadership. The Empire was the natural and legitimate fruit of the last two hundred years of the republic. Liberty in Rome was dead from inanition long before Cæsar's dictatorship.

From some points of view many have regarded the ancient spirit of Rome as dead with the end of the republic. Brutus has had admirers in every age, and his failure, it has been thought, meant death to Rome. The Empire in this view of it galvanized a corpse.<sup>1</sup> And of course this is not wholly without basis. Loss of freedom is a great loss, and if real liberty was dead in Rome before Cæsar, yet the Empire did in a measure close off all prospect of further constitutional adjustment to growing needs. But it must be remembered that liberty was never the essential thing to the Roman that it had been to the Greek. His principles were law, obedience, order, rather than equality and freedom, and these cardinal Roman ideals were sufficiently satisfied under rulers like Augustus, Trajan, and Marcus Aurelius. We see little sign, indeed, of satiety, decadence, or wearing out in the life of that Rome of the early Empire, and even our judgment of the

<sup>1</sup> One's views of Brutus cannot but be influenced by Shakespeare, but one should separate quite distinctly in one's thinking the Shakespearian from the historical personage. Shakespeare's portrait is much too glittering. Read on this period Strachan-Davidson's "Cicero" and Fowler's "Cæsar." Froude's "Cæsar" remains worth while, but is less reliable than these.

last terrible century of the republic is softened a little by such words as these of Cicero:

"And if our country has our love, as it ought to have in the highest degree—our country, I say, of which the force and natural attraction is so strong, that one of the wisest of mankind preferred his Ithaca, fixed like a little nest among the roughest of rocks, to immortality itself,—with what affection should we be warmed toward such a country as ours, which pre-eminently above all other countries is the seat of virtue, empire, and dignity? Its spirit, customs, and discipline ought to be our first object of study, both because our country is the parent of us all, and because as much wisdom must be thought to have been employed in the framing of such laws, as to establish so vast and powerful an empire."<sup>1</sup>

Just so, Virgil's proud announcement of the spirit and mission of Rome has as true and strong a ring to it as if it had been written in the days of the Scipios:

"Others, indeed, may summon fairest forms  
From marble or dull bronze—may plead their cause  
With greater eloquence—may map the heavens;  
But ye, my Romans, with imperial sway  
Do ye control the nations! Be it yours  
To impose the rule of peace on vanquished foes,  
Pity the lowly, and dash down the proud."<sup>2</sup>

To pity the vanquished was for Rome too rare, alas! But to crush the mighty, to maintain peace within her measureless borders, to rule the known civilized world from the Atlantic to the Euphrates, and from the Sahara to the North Sea, to hold back the flood of barbarism that surged restlessly against the barrier fortresses along the Rhine and the Danube,—this was the task of Imperial

<sup>1</sup> Cicero, "De Oratore," Book I.

<sup>2</sup> "Æneid," Book IX.

Rome for age after age. Cæsar succeeded Cæsar, sages and madmen, saints and brutes, soldiers and philosophers, and still Rome was mistress of the world. Christianity—founded in the reign of the first emperor—rose until it supplanted paganism; poetry, philosophy, and art waned,<sup>1</sup> old ideals of culture faded, east and west drifted apart once more, and yet if a rival to the city on the Tiber arose on the Bosphorus, the ruler of both was Cæsar and Augustus, and Rome gave the pride of her name to the Empire still. Then the Goths came. The unconquered walls were pierced by an enemy and a barbarian. The barrier of the Rhine broke and the German flood swept over Europe. The Roman Peace became a memory. The Empire, having endured nearly five centuries since Julius, was at last in western Europe the shadow of a great name.

To the ages that were to follow, Rome chiefly bequeathed four things,—an example of a highly centralized government, a consummate system of law, a body of literature which luminously set forth the deeds and ideals of classical times, and Latin Christianity. The first was to be obscured, but never forgotten, during the trying times of the early Middle Ages. The second was also to be thrust aside in a measure by the barbarians; but never for a year or a day was Europe wholly without the guiding influence of the Roman law, and before many centuries it was triumphantly revived by Italian doctors to be made all-powerful in the courts of Europe. The third was almost wholly forgotten for centuries. Virgil, no longer a poet, was spoken of darkly as a wizard. The knowl-

<sup>1</sup> For a most thoughtful and interesting account of the culture and thought of the later empire and its merging into the Middle Ages, see Taylor's "Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages."

edge of Greek died utterly away, and with the disappearance of Homer, Virgil, Horace, and much of Cicero, vanished all inner understanding of the great civilizations of which they were interpreters. But in the fulness of time came Petrarch, and it even came to be that no writer believed that his works would be immortal were they written in other than the Latin tongue or modeled on any master but Cicero. The fourth great bequest of Rome had not to wait nine centuries for its full appreciation. Christianity as interpreted and taught by the Bishop of Rome and his co-workers became, as Rome's temporal power passed away, the most potent single fact in the western world.

Christianity has often been referred to as the most powerful dissolving force within the Roman Empire—a force that directly contributed to its destruction. Perhaps it was. But it is more profitable perhaps to look upon it as a new and vigorous life growing within the old, decaying organism, destined in its institutional form to carry on the functions and the genius of the dying empire. For the first three centuries of our era the Church, growing and spreading as it undoubtedly was, was viewed with suspicion by the Court and with contempt by the learned. Yet even then there were not wanting powerful forces that made for righteousness,—forces which were in time practically to hand over their functions to the conquering religion of Christ. Stoicism was able to produce Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, noble fruit surely of a noble if inadequate philosophy. And if the Platonists too often lost themselves in empty visions, if they too completely accepted the saying of Anaxagoras, that his mission was “to contemplate the sun, the stars, and the course of

nature, and that this contemplation was wisdom," yet they based their thinking and their living on principles that were sound and eternal as far as they went. They were not all lost in vain contemplation. "What use," said Maximus of Tyr, "is there in knowledge unless we do those things for which knowledge is profitable? What use is there in the skill of the physician unless by that skill he heals the sick, or in the art of Phidias unless he chisels the ivory or the gold. . . . Hercules was a wise man, but not for himself, but that by his wisdom he might diffuse benefits over every land and sea. . . . Had he preferred to lead a life apart from men, and to follow an idle wisdom, Hercules would indeed have been a Sophist, and no one would call him the son of Zeus. For God himself is never idle; were he to rest, the sky would cease to move and the earth to produce, and the rivers to flow into the ocean, and the seasons to pursue their appointed course."<sup>1</sup>

Bravely indeed did the philosophers seek to stem the flood of evil and to teach mankind the secret of their own goodness. But the message of Stoics or Platonists was for the few. Most men could not understand their mysteries, and even of those who understood, few, alas, had the pure heart and the high ideals of Socrates and Marcus Aurelius. Some more potent sanction than duty, some more intelligible basis of right conduct than philosophy, was needed and was found in Christianity. This religion of humanity which the philosophers had failed to find, this simple gospel preached by a Jew to Athenians and Romans, became at last the guide of the Cæsars. Obedience to the laws of God for the sake of a human, loving Christ,

<sup>1</sup> Lecky, "History of European Morals," Vol. I., Chap. 2.

such obedience to be rewarded by eternal bliss—this was the simple basis of the new faith. Simple, direct, lofty in its moral precepts, sanctioned by the inspiring personality of Christ and the hope of immortality, the new religion had all the qualifications essential to success. Its organization soon took on all the perfection, the elasticity, the ideal adaptability, which were to make the Catholic Church the fit inheritor of Roman power and prestige. All the vigorous life of the later empire seems concentrated in the Church. The greatest Roman of the early fifth century was not an emperor but a bishop, not Honorius but Augustine, and during age after age that followed the Italy that had given the world Cæsar, Trajan, and the Antonines, brought forth as their successors Leo, Benedict, Gregory the Great, and Hildebrand. So it was that Rome still sent forth her ambassadors to Africa and to distant Britain, even though the Palatine had given place to the Lateran, and Cæsar's scepter was wielded by St. Peter.

But ancient Rome was gone. Gregory and Pliny belonged to different worlds. Even though the walls and the temples of the old city still stood intact, the glory was departed from Palatine and Forum, and Jerome's lament for the fall of Rome had a truth beyond his own vision. "Who could believe," he cries, "that Rome, built upon the conquest of the whole world, would fall to the ground? that the mother herself would become the tomb of her peoples? that all the regions of the East, of Africa and Egypt, once ruled by the queenly city, would be filled with troops of slaves and handmaidens?" The curtain had indeed fallen on a great drama, yet rather on an act in the drama of Europe, for in the scenes to come there will

reappear the heroes of the scenes that are past—Cæsars and bishops of Rome, with new incidents, new motives, and some new masks, but with the passions, the memories, the beliefs, the ideas of the former age running on without a break. The king is dead! *Long live the king!* Rome is fallen! *Rome is eternal!* The curtain is fallen on Senate and Forum. It rises on swinging censers and mitered heads.

## CHAPTER III

### ASSISI AND THE ITALY OF ST. FRANCIS

As you walk through the narrow streets of an old Italian city, especially of those hill-towns that are somewhat off the line of modern travel and trade, the words most often on your lips, perhaps, are the Middle Ages. The meaning of the phrase is a little vague. You only know in a general way that it refers to a period that was not Roman and not modern, but between the two, a period of political restlessness and confusion, during which Greek and Roman culture was largely forgotten and modern civilization had hardly begun. As you look further into the matter you find the period of greatest disorder and intellectual depression extending from the sixth to the ninth century. Indeed you find it hard to see any great change for the better dawning on Europe until the stirring of the waters that came in the twelfth century. Then as you feel your way on to the thirteenth, you find new influences, new emotions, new ways of looking at things growing stronger and more widespread, old systems and old ideas hardening and crystallizing as is their wont before they pass away. It is the century of St. Francis, St. Dominic, Innocent III., Thomas Aquinas, and Louis IX., of Philip Augustus, of Magna Charta, and of Simon de Montfort, of Dante, Niccolo Pisano, Duccio of Siena, and Giotto. And as you pass on you find the new stream of life growing and becoming ever more forceful until the world becomes conscious of the change, calls it the Renais-

sance, and talks of the Middle Age as a dark time that is past.

Yet as we shall see later, it was not wholly a dark time. The coming of the barbarians, the decay of learning, the political confusion, did make it an age of ignorance, an age during which the refinements of an advanced civilization, the taste for art, aptitude for broad and clear and serene thinking tended greatly to diminish, and culture in the Greek sense and in ours to practically disappear. But it was not at all an age of stagnation. Men's intellects were as keen and active as ever, and the life of the period was not only active, but fruitful. To expect peace and culture would be to expect the impossible. For as Rome's power in the west declined and disappeared the Roman peace passed away too. All through the fifth and sixth centuries the vandals in southern Spain and North Africa, the Visigoths in northern Spain, the Burgundians in the valley of the Rhone, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes in Britain, the Franks in France, Goths and Lombards in Italy itself marched in, destroyed, robbed, stared in rude amazement at the proud civilization they had conquered, settled down and ruled. No wonder that all lovers of peace and order were in despair. "Nations innumerable and savage," lamented St. Jerome, "have invaded all Gaul. The whole region between the Alps and the Pyrenees, the ocean and the Rhine, has been devastated by the Quadi, the Vandals, the Sarmati, the Alani, the Gepidae, the hostile Heruli, the Saxons, the Burgundians, the Alemanni, and the Pannonians. O wretched empire! Mayence, formerly so noble a city, has been taken and ruined, and in the Church many thousands of men have been massacred. . . . Aquitaine and the provinces of

Lyons and Narbonne, all save a few towns, have been depopulated; and these the sword threatens without while hunger ravages within. I cannot speak without tears of Toulouse, which the merits of the holy Bishop Exuperius have prevailed so far to save from destruction. Spain, even, is in daily terror lest it perish, remembering the invasion of the Cimbri; and whatsoever the other provinces have suffered once, they continue to suffer in their fear. I will keep silence concerning the rest, lest I seem to despair of the mercy of God.”<sup>1</sup>

The worst edge of the conquest was taken off in all the provinces but Britain, by the influence of the Church. The barbarians were early converted to the faith of the Roman provincials, and the fact of a common religion—with the gentler precepts of Christianity—curbed the savage instincts of the conquerors and provided the conquered both with sacred places of sanctuary and with the Church’s powerful mediation.<sup>2</sup> But even so, with the old ruling power gone forever—the new rulers of the West ignorant savages who were yet the hope of the future—you are bound to face a period of confusion, of painful friction, and disturbance, of great trial and distress, of great obscuring of the arts and ideals which flourish in a quieter, more stable age. And yet it is not to be called lost time—an age of darkness and stagnation. The years during which a great man is gathering the material, living the life, going through the trials and struggles which are to make a monumental work possible, are surely not to be counted wasted because the world

<sup>1</sup> Robinson, “Readings in European History,” Vol. I., p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> See for all this field the well-known histories of Duruy and Emerton, the more recent one by Professor Ferguson, and Robinson’s admirable “History of Western Civilization” and “Readings in European History.”

only sees the brilliant consummation. Europe's Middle Age was an age of adjustment, of assimilation. The genius of Greece and of Rome was giving way to the Teutons. For one reason or another both Greece and Rome, with all their enormous contributions to the world, had failed to bring forth such a union of intellectual, moral, esthetic, social, and political strength as would have continued self-renewing vitality and live forever. So now the barbarians had entered the field, and in the nature of things, a process of education, education by teaching and experience, had to begin whereby these new rulers of the West should be brought up to the needed level. In a certain sense Europe had to stop progress, to start at the beginning with these new pupils, train them bit by bit for a thousand years,<sup>1</sup> until at last, the long rest over, the West seized once more the genius of Greece and Rome, broadened and humanized the heritage of antiquity, added to it the energy, the joyousness, the vitality, and the romantic spirit of the Germanic races, and leaped forward to achievements of which the Athenians and the Romans themselves had never dreamed. The leap forward is the Renaissance. The period of training and assimilation is the Middle Age.

Our general feeling regarding the centuries from the fifth to the thirteenth, if we sum up our impression in a broad way, is that here is a sea on the one hand of discouraged provincials, and on the other of wild, untutored, savage, but thoroughly living, Teutons—the dominant race as regards brute strength. With these fierce newcomers civilization, mainly as represented and organized in the Church, is conducting a desperate battle. It is an age of

<sup>1</sup> See Robinson's "Readings in European History," Chapters III and V.

restlessness, of war, of instability, of doubtful law, in which the strong fighter is of necessity prominent, so it is called the age of chivalry.<sup>1</sup> The disorders of the time make it an age of much misery and ignorance. But it is an age of strong faith, too, of heroic struggle for the supremacy of truth and right over the forces of brute strength, an age in which the Church Militant, summoning to its aid the whole force of its marvelous organization, the devotion of its ministers, the mysterious power that it claimed over the soul's destiny beyond the grave, and the inevitable influence of the constant holding up of ideals of goodness and justice, grappled with the forces of anarchy and became far and away the most impressive and most powerful influence in medieval Europe.

During those centuries the Church is all-pervasive. It does not always win. Gigantic misdeeds, desperate misery, and degradation exist in spite of it. The corruption of the times terribly infects the very ministry of the Church, so that monasteries and cathedrals become dens of thieves, foul with evil of every description. And yet not only does her effort never relax, but even where she fails to conquer her influence is powerful and incessant as an upward-pulling force.<sup>2</sup> But the contest was a terrible

<sup>1</sup>The age of "chivalry" properly falls into the centuries between the tenth and the fifteenth, perhaps. Indeed the word is so various in its meanings that it is difficult to use it accurately at all. In later medieval and modern literature chivalry has been so idealized that it bears little resemblance to the usual situation in the *actual* Europe of the eleventh or thirteenth centuries. Soldiers will always vary infinitely as to nobility of personal character, and it was so with the medieval knight, but the word which we translate "knight" from the old chronicles is simply *miles*, the ordinary Latin word for "soldier." He was, that is, the one professional independent fighter of his time. Ordinarily chivalry, outside of romantic literature, must be taken to mean the class of professional fighters whose habit it was to enter the field on their own horses and wearing their own armor. With the Crusades came the custom of forming orders of knighthood, and thereafter the ideas of chivalry became systematized into more of their later idealized shape.

<sup>2</sup>See Robinson's "Readings," chapters 5, 16, and 17. For the evil that infected the ministry of the Church see especially pages 376-9. For the intellectual life of the medieval Church and for medieval culture generally read

one, and many of the noblest spirits of the Middle Ages longed for release from it. Scores and hundreds, looking upon their individual labor as utterly vain, and feeling that prayer and penance would avail more with the Almighty to turn away his wrath from humanity, fled to deserts, to forests, to caves of the mountains, and there, apart from the evils of the world, wrestled in prayer and fastings with God. And even those stronger ones, as we must think them, who as priests or bishops, or organized in their monasteries, stayed in the world and toiled as well as prayed, looked upon death as a sweet release. The world to this righteous few was a battle-field—a vale of sorrow. Pleasure was vanity and sin. Delights of the flesh were snares of the evil one, to be turned from with horror. Hell and Satan were terribly real—reaching out for the souls of men<sup>1</sup> with a might and a horrible confidence that only God's eternal strength could meet—with an apparent success that was an inscrutable and sorrowful mystery. Comfort was only to be sought in prayer, in meditation, in thoughts of heaven. So it comes about that those utterances of the Middle Ages which came from the inmost deeps of men's souls, and which have therefore struck most deeply into the world's heart since, were solemn warnings of judgment to come like the "*Dies Irae, dies illa*"—

"That day of wrath, that dreadful day  
When heaven and earth shall pass away,"

or sweet thoughts of the heaven that was to be the rest and blessed consolation of the just after their earthly toils,

McCabe's "Abelard," Poole's "Illustrations of Medieval Thought," and Rashdall's "Universities of Europe," especially vol. I.

<sup>1</sup> See the references in chapter IV. to the frescoes in the Campo Santo of Pisa.

like the hymn of Bernard of Cluny—still after so many centuries most precious to us in its English form:

“Jerusalem the golden,  
With milk and honey blest,  
Beneath thy contemplation  
Sink heart and voice oppressed,  
I know not, oh I know not  
What joys await us there,  
What radiancy of glory,  
What bliss beyond compare.

There is the throne of David;  
And there, from care released,  
The shout of them that triumph,  
The song of them that feast;  
And they who with their leader  
Have conquered in the fight  
Forever and forever  
Are clad in robes of white.”

It is the longing of the weary and wounded soldier for peace, of the wanderer for home, of the just man gazing indignantly at misery and wrong for the punishment of evil-doers and the comfort of the oppressed. The judgment-seat of Christ, the life beyond the grave, were the comfort and hope of those dark times. And so it is natural enough that the supreme voice of medieval Europe should sing of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise.

In the pleasant land of Umbria, perched high on the slope of a mountain, breeze-swept and sun-drenched, stands the old city of Assisi. And here, towards the end of the twelfth century, was born a man who lived more nearly, so far as we can tell, after the pattern of

Christ himself than any one else we know of during the last two thousand years. By virtue, too, of his effort to be true, to be simple, and to live out the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, he not only fulfilled the best ideals of medieval Christianity and won the reverence of his church, but sent a wave of new life into his own and succeeding generations which formed one of the most tremendous vitalizing forces of the thirteenth century.

Francis Bernardone,<sup>1</sup> son of a wealthy Assisan merchant, grew up with much of the sunny nature of southeastern France, the land of his mother. Not of noble blood himself, he was yet welcomed to the best circles of Assisi. His father's money made possible a life of pleasure, and though there is no reason for charging him in these earlier years with degrading dissipation, it was undoubtedly for him a time of gayety rather than seriousness, and his unconquerable cheerfulness and gift of story and song made him one of the best loved men in the city. But just about as he was entering his twenty-first year there came a war between Assisi and the neighboring city of Perugia. Francis fought at the side of his companions, and when the Assisans were defeated, went with them to a Perugian prison. Here, as in the banquets at home, he was the life of the company, and yet it must have been a hard and dreary year that he spent in Perugia, and he brought home with him the seeds of a long illness. So with disease and weakness following the time of im-

<sup>1</sup> The best life of St. Francis is that of Paul Sabatier. With it should be read Brother Leo's "Mirror of Perfection," translated by Sebastian Evans and published by Dent of London, and the "Little Flowers of St. Francis," published in the Temple classics. A good little book about St. Francis and Assisi

invaluable as a sympathetic introduction to the city itself and its associations is Lina Duff Gordon's "Story of Assisi." Extracts from the first life of St. Francis, Thomas of Celano's, written in 1228, are given in English in Robinson's "Readings," pages 387-395.

prisonment and exile, the darker, more serious side of life came to him in many hours of sober, lonely thinking.

A certain definite consciousness of the change within him came one day during his convalescence, as with slow step he walked up the slope of a stone-paved street—the hard, gray walls rising straight and unbeautiful on either side—not a touch of softness or green about him—and passed through one of the frowning old city gates. In an instant the hardness and dull monotone of the city street gave place to the lovely green of an Umbrian hillside. Away above him towered the gray old castle, La Rocca. Below him lay the exquisite valley that he knew so well, with garden and farm, meadow and woodland, the rippling silver of a little river curving its way there and adding its message of soft peace, and in the distance more hills, melting off in gray-blue haze. The double charm of nature's fairest aspect and the associations of home might surely comfort the tired heart of Francis. And yet no comfort came. Every quiver of a leaf, every odor of the field, every call of a bird had once brought instant response within him. But nothing now seemed worth while, and he turned back to the city depressed and perplexed. As strength returned, his old friends sought him again, but he was quieter and more thoughtful at their feasts than in the old days, and if now and then his gayety returned for a moment, or if warlike ardor prompted him to seek the splendor and danger of a knightly career, the flame died quickly down, and again in quiet meditation he would continue his search for the source of lasting joy. Once life had been full of color and pleasure for him. Now it was weary and unprofitable. But instead of hurling himself for consolation into

dissipation and excitement, he simply went his way, neither weeping nor singing, earnestly seeking the pearl of great price.

This very earnestness tended more and more to strengthen his relations with the Church and deepen his religious feeling. He made it one of his peculiar tasks to aid with his own hands in the repair of such broken down and neglected churches as he could find within reach, and would often hear mass and worship quietly and devoutly in peaceful little out-of-the-way places, where the priest or monk was accustomed to conduct his service alone or with but one or two humble worshipers. Reverence and deep feeling was far more possible in these nooks than in the city churches, and one day, as Francis prayed before a figure of his crucified Lord, the lips of Christ seemed to speak to him and give him comfort. He seemed to feel the Saviour's words to his disciples—read perfunctorily enough by the priest, perhaps—burning into him and printing a command on his own heart. To go into all the world and preach the Gospel, to heal the sick and comfort the distressed, to follow in the footsteps of his Master, and do His work,—these things suddenly stood clearly before him as a divine commission. In joy of heart he seized on the message from heaven, and applied Christ's words to his disciples directly to himself. He must give himself up to absolute poverty and unwearied work, as Christ himself did—work for the simple and direct object of doing good to humankind. His bride, to use the quaint parable that he referred to so often, was the Lady Poverty, for he would own nothing, and his living from day to day must be such as his hands could bring to him or loving charity could give him. "Freely ye have received,

freely give!" No fee was required for the good tidings brought by Christ; none would be asked by Francis. Only alms would be asked, for this Christ had sanctioned. "Provide neither silver nor gold nor brass in your purses, neither scrip nor two coats, nor shoes nor staff, for the laborer is worthy of his hire."

At once the divine message was obeyed. The sunny heart, the lovable personality, the gift of song, the spontaneous joy in the life of nature—all of these came back when Francis gave back to his father all he had received from him, made for himself a little hut near a tiny old chapel down in the valley, and devoted himself to his new life. His ideals were perfectly simple. There was sure to be always enough sin and misery and suffering to keep him busy. To help those who needed help, to own nothing, and so have no earthly cares, to accept his daily bread and nothing more from those who received the blessing of his help and teaching as from those who wished to assist him, to live and work as Christ had lived and worked—these simple but tremendous principles became the basis of the young Assisan's life and loving toil. Some looked on with mockery, some with cynicism, some with grave and wistful admiration. But there could not long be doubt as to his single-minded devotion, his constancy, and the undoubted good that he did, and he soon had companions to share his ideals, his poverty, and his work. No care of the wretched was too repulsive or too wearisome for these men. To go into the foulest dens, to wash and anoint the sores of the leper, to face cold and hunger and fatigue for the Master's sake, to bring comfort to the distressed, consolation to the sorrowing, loving advice to the sinner, help and encouragement—these were

the care of the little band of brothers whose huts arose in a group about the oratory of Francis.

To tell how the little company grew into an order—the Order of Friars Minor or Little Brothers—how it obtained the patronage of bishops and the sanction of a pope, how it grew beyond the control of its founder and became one of the greatest religious organizations that Europe had ever seen, how Francis delegated the organization and discipline of the order to others—distrusting himself in such matters—and how at last, after watching with sadness and misgiving the pure ideals he had believed in becoming clouded by earthly aims and ambitions, he died and was canonized by Pope Gregory IX,—to tell all these things would not, perhaps, be to tell the essential message of St. Francis after all. That message can best be told in his deeds and words. And yet it is perplexing to know what deeds and words are peculiarly characteristic. Not those relating to asceticism, certainly, for hardly as he treated himself, severely as he mortified his flesh, he was in this respect only carrying out the ideals of his age. Neither were his work and sacrifices for others his most essential characteristic, though they were very nearly so. You remember how soon after his realization of his mission he met a leper, diseased and filthy, on the highroad, and how, in disgust and horror, he turned aside, how in an instant the question came to him, “Would Christ have turned away? Am I worthier than my Master?” and how, after a moment’s struggle, he ran after the leper, tended him, and washed his sores, comforting him with loving words. And when you think how this spirit became his habitual one, you are apt to say, “Here is the real Francis, the comforter of the poor and

needy.'" And you are far from being entirely wrong. Possibly it is nearer the truth to say that even philanthropy and care for others, carried out with a different spirit, would have been unavailing to do what Francis did; that it was rather his spontaneous joyousness, his oneness with Christ, that gave his life its power and its immortality. The good he did was done with joy. His sacrifices were made with gladness for Christ's sake.

You love especially to dwell upon this triumphant open-heartedness of Francis, for in this and in his consciousness of a personal contact with Christ lay his gift of vitality, of individualism in religious life, of warmth and joy in the acceptance of the message of the Gospels. "Why shovest thou," he says to a brother who bore a sorrowful countenance, "why shovest thou outwardly this dolour and sadness on account of thine offenses? Keep this sadness to thyself and God only, and pray him of his mercy that he forgive thee and restore to thy soul the healthy joyance whereof it hath been deprived as a punishment for thy sin. But before me and others be heedful ever to have cheerfulness, for it becometh not a servant of God before his brother or any other to show sadness and a troubled countenance." So when he saw some of his zealous companions torturing their bodies unduly, he was able to see quite clearly the limitations of asceticism. "The servant of God in eating and drinking and sleeping, and supplying the other necessities of the body, ought to satisfy this body with discretion, in such sort as that brother body shall have no right to murmur, saying, 'I cannot stand upright and attend to prayer nor be cheerful in tribulations of the mind, nor work other good works, for that thou dost not satisfy my needs.' " In this spirit

he reproved a brother who awoke one night in suffering and fear of death through insufficient nourishment. Brother Leo—the familiar friend of Francis—tells the story quaintly enough. “Then the blessed Francis forthwith had a table laid out, and, as a man full of charity and discretion, did eat with him (the starving one), lest he should be ashamed to eat alone; and by his will all the other brethren did eat likewise. For that brother and all the rest were newly converted to the Lord, and did afflict their bodies beyond measure. And after that they had eaten together, the blessed Francis said unto the rest of the brethren, ‘My best beloved, I say unto you that each one of you ought to pay heed unto his own nature, for, albeit that some one of you may be strong enow to be sustained by less food than other some, yet it is my will that he which needeth more food shall not be bound to imitate that other herein, but paying heed to his own nature let him allow his body the necessity thereof, in such sort that he may be enough strong to serve the Spirit. For, whereas, we be held to beware of superfluity of food, the which is a hindrance both to the body and the soul, so likewise and even more ought we to beware of too great abstinence, seeing that the Lord willeth mercy and not sacrifice.’ ”

This sanity, this whole-hearted attitude to life, showed itself just as clearly—perhaps to us even more delightfully—in his way of looking at the dumb creatures of God, animate and inanimate. Birds and animals were to him brothers and sisters. So were the trees, the flowers, the elements, the planets, even the sun and moon. There are few lovelier incidents in the life of any saint than the sermon to the birds at Bevagna. And we may add to this

from Brother Leo's jottings little touches just as significant of a love for all created things which is not easily paralleled. "Above all other birds," says Leo, "did he love the crested lark, and he would say of her, 'Sister Lark has a hood like the religious, and an humble bird is she, for she gladly goeth by the way to find her a few grains of corn, and so she findeth them even among the dung she taketh them therefrom and eateth them. When she soareth she doth praise God right sweetly, even as the good religious that doth look down on earthly things, whose conversation is evermore in heaven, and whose interest is always toward the praise of God.' And for that he did perceive these similitudes in them, he did most gladly look upon them. Therefore it pleased the Lord that these most holy birdies should show some token of the love they bore unto him, in the hour of his death. For on the Saturday evening after vespers before the night wherein he passed away unto the Lord, a great multitude of larks came above the roof of the house wherein he lay, and flying a little way off did make a wheel after the manner of a circle round the roof, and by their sweet singing did seem to be praising the Lord along with him."

The gentle saint had great trouble with his eyes—a trouble which ended in blindness. It was considered necessary to cauterize his face, and he who thought nothing of toil or sacrifice or exposure felt his flesh shrink from the fiery pain of the branding-iron. So after prayer he spoke to the fire: "Fire, my brother, noble and useful amongst other creatures, be thou gracious unto me in this hour, seeing that of old have I loved thee, and yet will love thee for the love of Him that did create thee. Earnestly, moreover, do I pray the Creator that

did create both thee and me, that he will so temper thine heat as that I may be able to abide it." "And when he had ended his prayer," says Brother Leo, "he did sign the fire with the sign of the cross. But we that were with him at that time did all flee away for pity and compassion toward him, and only the leech did remain with him. But when the cautery was made we returned unto him, who said, 'O feeble-hearted and of little faith, wherefore did ye flee? In truth I say unto you that I felt neither pain nor any heat of the fire. Yea, and it be not now well seared, let him again sear it better!' Nor is it a marvel that the fire and other creatures were at times obedient to him, for as we that were with him have full ofttimes seen he had so great affection toward them and did so greatly delight in them, and his spirit was moved with so great pity and compassion for them that he would not see them treated unfairly, and he would so talk with them with gladness both inward and outward as if they had reason, whence by occasion whereof he was ofttimes rapt up to God."

In brief, Francis brought back religion to earth and humanity, idealized and beautiful. He made the name of Christ a comfort and a joy instead of a cold theological conception, real and terrible enough when associated with condemnation, but empty of love and pity. It was not that Francis rejected any of the distinctive medieval religious ideas. He was a faithful son of the Church. He was obedient to the Pope. He was suspicious of bodily pleasures. He scorned the pursuit of learning, and never dreamed of questioning the doctrines of the Church. But the colder, sterner, gloomier side of medieval Christianity, its insistence on human depravity, its steady contempla-

tion of hell, its repression of natural human nature—from all this Francis quite unconsciously led a revolt. The world was beautiful to him, and the love of Christ made it more so. Naturalness, individualism, love of humanity—these were after all to be the basal ideas of the era that was coming. The inspiration that came from the renewed study of the ancient civilizations Francis never felt. And yet he stands out as clearly as Giotto and Dante as one who brought into life a new health, a new soundness of heart, a new capacity for happiness, and a personal sense of responsibility to God which heralds forth unmistakably the positive individualism of the Renaissance.

As you look up at Assisi from the plain, you see the basilica which was built by the companions of St. Francis after his death. His body rests beneath it. Its walls are covered by Giotto's lovely frescoes, illustrating the life of the saint. You may look at them and hear them interpreted still by a little friar who loves the memory of St. Francis with a personal love, and to whom every tale of that life—the sermon to the birds, the casting forth of devils from Arezzo, the bringing forth of water from the rock by prayer—is sacred truth. And yet, if you wish to be near the very home of Francis and of his order, you must go rather to the little oratory, the Portiuncula, down in the valley. A great church has been built over it, St. Mary of the Angels, but the little stone hut in which St. Francis prayed is still untouched, and it stands in peace there protected by the sheltering walls of the later structure. A brown-frocked Franciscan will take you through a passage to an open space where roses are growing, and will tell you a strange story. St. Francis, the tale runs, was one night sorely tempted of the Devil to moderate his



ST. FRANCIS CASTING FORTH THE DEVILS FROM AREZZO  
From the Gothic cycle of the Lives of the Saints, Arezzo



austerities. Longing came upon his tired mind and delicate frame to seek rest and comfort, and it seemed to him that these temptations came surely from the Evil One. So at last he rose from his couch in wrath, and though it was a cold night, he went out and threw himself naked into a bed of thorns. And as he lay there praising God, a great light shone about him, and angels came to lead him tenderly to his hut again and there comfort him. And on the bushes roses grew with no thorns. To this day the miracle is wrought on the flowers of St. Francis. Every spring the roses still bloom on the thornless branches. Still they smile in soft radiance at the little fig-tree on whose branches a grasshopper was wont to come to sing with the saint. And every rose breathes with its perfume the sweet memory of the saint whose asceticism even is gentler than that of others—of St. Francis of Assisi, this good friend of all the world, to whom birds and insects and angels ministered as to a brother. And now close with his own exultant hymn:

*Most high, almighty and most gracious Lord, Thine be the praises, and the glory, and the honor, and every blessing, for unto Thee alone, O most highest, do they belong, and no man is worthy to make mention of Thy name.*

Praised be Thou, O Lord, of all thy creatures, and above all of Brother Sun, my Lord, that doth illumine us with the dawning of the day. For fair is he and bright, and the brightness of his glory doth signify Thou, O Thou most highest.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of Sister Moon and the stars that thou hast shapen in the heavens, bright and precious and comely.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of Brother Wind, and the air, and of the clouds, and the clear, and of all the times of the sky whereby thou dost make provision for thy creatures.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of Sister Water, for manifold is her use, and humble is she, and precious and chaste.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of Brother Fire, by whom thou dost lighten our darkness, and comely is he and joyful and masterful and strong.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of Sister Earth, our mother that doth cherish us and hath us in keeping and doth bring forth fruit in abundance and flowers of many colors and the grass.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of them that do show forgiveness unto others for love of Thee, and do endure sickness and tribulation. Yea, blessed be they that do endure in peace for of thee, O Thou most Highest, shall they be crowned.

Praised be Thou, O my Lord, of Sister Death, the death of the body from whom no man living may escape, but woe unto them that shall die in deadly sin, and blessed be they that shall walk according unto thy most holy will, for unto them shall the second death do no hurt.

Praise ye and bless my Lord, and give thanks unto Him, and serve Him in all humbleness.

## CHAPTER IV

### GENOA AND PISA

It is rather a shock to turn from Assisi to the maritime cities of the coast. Not that there is not much that is material and brutal and self-seeking enough in the story of Assisi if we choose to look for it. Only the memory of Francis and the brush of Giotto give us so much in Assisi that is better worth thinking about than war or pillage, and much more satisfying to ponder over than destruction and suffering, that the fiercer and more turbulent pages of the story are forgotten, and the name of the little city on the hill only brings to your mind the thought of the gentle apostle and the lovely frescoes that tell of his life. But it is not quite so with Genoa and Pisa. Pisa, indeed, is redeemed by her Campo Santo, her cathedral, her baptistery, and the achievements of the three great sculptors who began the revival of Italian art—Niccola, Giovanni, and Andrea. But "*Genova la Superba*," Genoa the proud—what has she to give us? Only the record of a brave, enterprising, shrewd, and unscrupulous race of sailors and merchants. One great modern name do we know and reverence in Genoa, that of Giuseppe Mazzini, of whom more later, and one older one, Christopher Columbus, mariner in the service of Spain. But in the days of her independence no great artist or poet or prophet, no creations of permanent value or beauty, no gift to the world, beyond the one great sailor, that humanity would really miss. Take away

Rome, Venice, Florence, and we should feel at once a keen sense of vital loss. Take away the memory of Genoa, and there would only be blotted out a few pages of brilliant deeds in war, a record of shrewdness, boldness, and cunning in trade, a tale of marvelous city vitality choked, and at last overcome, by fierce factions.

As you walk about the streets of Genoa, or look up from the harbor at the superb slope with its proud city—wealthy and beautiful once more—there is little to remind you of the old mistress of the Riviera except her beauty. A few churches and here and there a few squalid and half-hidden remnants, these are all that remain of the splendid palaces that once rivaled those of the Grand Canal. “Dost thou remember,” wrote Petrarch, who saw the city as it was in the fourteenth century, “Dost thou remember that time when the Genoese were the happiest people upon earth, and their country appeared a celestial residence, even as the Elysian fields are painted? From the side of the sea, what an aspect it presented! Towers which seemed to threaten the firmament, hills covered with olives and oranges, marble palaces perched on the summit of the rocks, with delicious retreats beneath them where art conquered nature, and at the sight of which the very sailors checked the splashing of their oars, all intent to regard. Whilst the traveler who approached by land with amazement beheld men and women right royally adorned, and luxuries abundant in mountain and in wood unknown elsewhere in royal courts. As the foot touched the threshold of the city, it seemed as if it had reached the temple of happiness, of which it was said, as of Rome of old, ‘This is the city of the kings.’” But this is all gone long ago. To find the tokens of what Genoa once was

you must look out to sea, let your eye fall on the rocky point of the Porto Venere, and then let the annals of the city bring back to you some little echo of the vigorous old life that once filled these waters with the stir and storm of Ligurian energy and ambition.

If we are to trust the great inscription over the architrave of the cathedral nave, Genoa is old indeed. "Janus," it tells us, "a Trojan prince, skilled in astrology, and seeking on his travels a healthy, strong, and secure place to dwell in, reached Janua, already founded by Janus, the great-grandson of Noah, and perceiving that it was well protected from the raging of the sea, increased it in power and renown." But whether its founding dates quite so far back or not, the city, when it first emerges to light after the dismemberment of the Roman empire, is having to fight hard for life.<sup>1</sup> Like many another city that had flourished under Roman rule, Genoa had passed through deep and stormy waters after Rome's fall. For centuries darkness hides from us her struggles for existence. We only know that all of the towns along the Riviera were torn by internal strife and harried by Norman and Saracen raids until it seems marvelous that they survived at all. Yet life somehow remained, and the men of Genoa were trained to a fierce keenness, a rough hardiness, that gradually enabled them to resist attack, to compel their neighbors to submission, and to retaliate on the Saracens. They learned to make stout and swift galleys, and on the heights of Sarzano they built a citadel, a palace for their bishop, who for many generations was their guide and leader, and a church, St. Mary of the Castle, with strong

<sup>1</sup> A good introduction to Genoese history may be sought in Bent's "Genoa" and Milleson's "Stories from Genoese History."

walls behind which they could successfully defy their enemies on shore. Soon they were able to send their ships farther and farther along the coast and out to sea, competing with the Saracens on their own ground, meeting them fearlessly in battle, and extending their influence and trade to Corsica, Sardinia, and the Balearic islands.

But the great beginning of Genoese glory came with the Crusades, for the galleys and skilled mariners of Genoa were needed by the princes and warriors who were faring forth to the conquest of Jerusalem. Many a gallant knight stepped on board the great ships in that lovely harbor and paid good red gold for transportation of himself and his men-at-arms to alien lands where their bones were soon to whiten in the desert. And the ships that bore the Crusaders to Egypt and Palestine came back with eastern wares. There was rich gain to the ship-owners in both voyages, and they eagerly built more galleys as more cross-bearing warriors came to seek passage, and as the trade with Egypt, Syria, and Constantinople brought more and more wealth to the city. Not only did the eastern trade increase. The new wealth, the exhilaration of success, the larger knowledge of the Mediterranean world sent the Genoese fleets in all directions, seeking new goods and new markets. Along the coasts of Spain they ranged, bringing back rich booty from the sack of Almeria in 1146, opening up trade where they could not rob, passing the pillars of Hercules and peering off into the unknown seas whose veil was to be lifted in time by one of their fellow-countrymen. Away at the other end of the Mediterranean, too, in the Black Sea, Genoa, by a shrewd stroke, gained the favor of the Greek-Roman ruler of

Constantinople. Gradually she established a supremacy in the coasts and waters of The Euxine which lasted until the conquering Turks came in the fifteenth century. Streets and quays were given her in Constantinople with immunity from tribute, and to her especial gratification the emperor gave her a Venetian monastery yclept Pantocratore. Rejoicing exceedingly over this supplanting of their great rival, the Genoese moved the building stone by stone to their home city, and built the materials into their famous bank—the Bank of St. George.<sup>1</sup> Soon the old town of Pera, across the Golden Horn, was given to the triumphant Ligurian merchants. Even before this a group of wealthy cities, colonies of Genoa, had been rising in the Crimea, and as the mother city acquired the commercial control of the Bosphorus the peninsula became the great focus for merchandise brought by caravan from central Asia. All through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries this supremacy in the northern highway of Asiatic trade in the Bosphorus and the Black Sea, in the Caucasus, Armenia, and northern Asia Minor, continued to flourish and to bring vast wealth to the home city in her proud eyrie on the Riviera. Only with the conquests of Mohammed II.—conquests on which the too selfish Genoese had looked quite coolly, suspecting profit and privilege to come—was the rich Italian settlement at Pera swept away, and the destruction of the great colony of Caffa in the Crimea soon after sounded the knell of Genoa's supremacy in the Black Sea—indeed, of her greatness as a Mediterranean power. From that time the star

<sup>1</sup> St. George was the patron saint of Genoa, and was thence adopted as the patron saint of England by her Crusading king, Richard Cœur-de-Lion. The familiar old red cross flag of England was once known throughout the Mediterranean as the flag of Genoa.

of the Italian cities waned, and that of Spain and Portugal waxed and prevailed.

It was in the thirteenth century, the period of her most rapid advance in wealth and power, that Genoa fought out her great duel with Pisa. The quarrel was an old one. The two cities were too close to one another as they each fought their desperate struggle for existence against the Saracens, as they learned the arts of war and trade, as they built their galleys and wandered forth seeking gain and profitable outlet for their energy. Then Pope Benedict VIII., most unhappily, in his zeal to win Corsica and Sardinia from the infidels, promised the lordship of the islands to whichever one of the two cities should conquer them and establish in them the true faith. It was now the interest of each not only to triumph over the Saracens, but to checkmate one another. Pisa won control over Sardinia, but Corsica remained a fatal bone of contention, and as the ambition and power of each city increased, as the popes tended more and more in the twelfth century and the thirteenth to favor Genoa, and as Pisa turned more and more to the emperor, the duel saw added to the original commercial rivalry the fierce feud between Guelf and Ghibelline. So the quarrel became one of life and death. To trace the succession of their victories and defeats would, indeed, be unprofitable enough. You can scarcely avoid some sympathy with Pisa, even if only because you are conscious of a debt to her, but there was little to choose between them on the score of either enterprise or unscrupulous cunning, of either gallantry or ferocity. At last Genoa prevailed. In the great battle off Meloria in August, 1284, one hundred and twenty Genoese and allied ships met and crushed

after a savage and obstinate fight seventy-two galleys of Pisa. It was a decisive victory. The blows which Genoa might in future strike at her defeated rival only brought unnecessary humiliation and suffering to an already declining city, and made more certain the future supremacy of Florence over the exhausted Tuscan sea-power. A hundred years later a Genoese expedition under an admiral of the great house of D'Oria almost dealt similar destruction to Venice. The Venetians were defeated in a great battle. The queen of the Adriatic was brought to the very verge of ruin when, as if by miracle—as the two forces fought bitterly and ferociously at Chioggia—the tide of victory changed. Vettor Pisani, whose defeat at Pola had brought him to stern imprisonment and had almost brought destruction to Venice, was taken from his dungeon and placed in command once more. The rejoicing Genoese, insolently refusing to make peace until they should camp in the Piazza of St. Mark, were at last defeated and most of them captured; and the year 1380, instead of renewing the glory of Meloria, rather saw the definite beginning of Genoa's decline as compared with her splendid Adriatic rival.

And now what of Genoa's Tuscan rival,<sup>1</sup> the city so humbled in 1284, and left so hopelessly behind by the triumphant Ligurians in the race for commercial and maritime greatness? Pisa's destiny was a strange one. The same century, in fact the same generation, that saw her humiliation, gave her that glory which will be hers

<sup>1</sup> In the lack of a good book on Pisa in English it is worth while to mention the admirable and helpfully illustrated monograph in German by Paul Schubring. Read Howell's "Pitiless Pisa" in his "Tuscan Cities." For the sculptors refer to Freeman, "Italian Sculptors of the Renaissance," Leader Scott, "Sculpture, Renaissance and Modern," Ruskin, "Val D'Arno," and the first volume of Marcel Revmond, "La Sculpture Florentine."

when her conqueror is long forgotten, the glory of reviving vitality in Italian art. Pisa was the teacher of Florence herself. And though her strength and inspiration soon failed her, so that her exhausted hand had to pass on the torch to the sister city that was beginning her glorious career further up the valley of the Arno, yet when you look over the quiet old streets and walk beneath the hoary, crumbling walls you are on ground that to all lovers of beauty should be in a measure sacred. Here lived and worked Niccola and his son Giovanni, who while Pisa was nearing her doom—even while the blow fell, and the exultant Genoese were rejoicing in their victory at Meloria—were creating the first forms of real life and natural beauty that Italy had seen for many centuries. Niccola learned of Greek teachers indeed, for the workers of Byzantium were the best in the world, but he lived to surpass his masters and to bring back *reality* to art.

There is little doubt as to your first proceeding when you step from your train at Pisa. Many as are the spots in the old city that you will wish to see and to dream over later on, yet it is without the smallest hesitation that you direct your ragged driver to the Duomo. And then, after a short rattling drive through narrow, crooked streets you see the top of the famous Campanile—the Leaning Tower—over intervening roofs. Another turn, and the great group is before you—cathedral, tower, baptistery, and Campo Santo, and you dismount and prepare to explore. You climb the tower first, not because it attracts you most, but because you think it may be worth while to get your bearings from the top. So up you toil, and sufficiently tiresome it is, but you want the view and you have some curiosity to know how the slant of the tower

will affect you. In neither respect is the fruit of your ascent very startling. The view is interesting in its way, but not unusually beautiful, and like every bird's-eye view that you have ever seen, it lacks character, and is scarcely worth the trouble taken to obtain it. The sloping top is novel enough, and with the high wind that is blowing, you have to be cautious in moving about, but probably your sense of danger is greater than it needs to be, and doubtless if you did slip, the iron railing would check your progress. You look over the higher edge to see how the slant affects you, but it is really hardly noticeable there, and on the whole, you are inclined to suspect travelers of some romancing when they have descanted on so tempting a subject as the Leaning Tower. Not that it does not lean. It does, very decidedly, and the illusion of impending catastrophe is startling enough if you stand beneath.

Now you peep into the great cathedral. It is one of the most impressive in Italy. Many of its characteristics are common to a number of the Italian churches, but your eye falls with peculiar interest on the columns, each different from the others, monuments, all of them, of the far roaming of the Pisan fleets which once brought these home one by one from old temples in different parts of the Mediterranean world. Once they witnessed sacrifices to Athena or Zeus, to Apollo or Neptune. Now they stand in stately order, musing great memories of the old gods that have passed away, and looking down as years come and go on the worship of this new God that has conquered those of Athens and Rome. Up in the dome of the apse, too, you see a magnificent old Byzantine mosaic, a colossal head of Christ on the usual gold back-

ground. It is most stately and impressive, not real or human, and evidently not meant to be so. Among the votive offerings hanging by the altar is a little child's dress. You wonder what story of love and thankfulness it is meant to tell. It is a pathetic and beautiful thing, this custom of votive offerings. You have often liked it as you read of it in the classics, and here you see it carried out in all sincerity and reverence by these descendants of Etruscans and Romans in modern Italy.

With heightened excitement, you now turn your thoughts to the Baptistry and the Campo Santo. There, after all, are the things you came here to see. So you leave the Duomo by the door facing the Baptistry, and pause there for a moment before entering. It is a wonderful old building in its way, on the whole the most beautiful example of rich Byzantine carving that you have seen or expect to see. The figures taken individually may be stiff and unnatural; they doubtless are so, for though Greek workmen carved them, they were Greeks who had long abandoned the attempt to reproduce life, to vitalize and idealize. But they had not lost the Greek instinct for beauty. One does not look in Byzantine painting for the naturalness and perspective of the Pompeian frescoes, or in Byzantine sculpture for the life and beauty of the Parthenon frieze or the Venus de Milo. Fourth-century Greeks, first-century Romans, thirteenth-century Byzantines, or Byzantine-taught Italians had ideals too much at variance to permit of much profitable comparison. But this work on the Pisan Baptistry, like the mosaics of St. Mark's, has its own stateliness and effectiveness. Dead it is, but with majesty and a certain memory, so to speak, of life and beauty in each marble limb and face that awes

and impresses you. And the total effect of the whole richly carved building is beautiful from any point of view. Just for a moment you peep in to see at first hand the famous pulpit that you have studied so often in photographs. There it is by the great font, its pillars resting, three of them at least, on the familiar old lions, and above—the far-famed reliefs of the life of Christ. You identify each form as you walk about it, each crude, often unlovely, face and figure in which the budding life of the Renaissance is trying to break forth from the stubborn stone. You bring back to your mind the eager face of the sculptor, his anxious studying of his old Roman model, his uncertain, impatient chipping of the marble as his hand—practiced only in the conventional work of the schools—sought to create the graceful, living lines that his soul imagined and craved to realize. What great things were held for the world then in that dusty workshop, those smitings of Niccola's chisel, those half-formed dreams of this pioneer of the Renaissance! These reliefs have the fascination that all things have that embody the first expression of a great idea; there is in them the latent energy, the dawning life of tremendous possibilities in the years to come—a certain charm, too, that the fully developed art of the coming centuries may not possess.

Now, before you go to see Niccola's model in the Campo Santo, turn to your Vasari<sup>2</sup> and see what he says of these things. "Niccola Pisano," he says, "first worked under certain Greek sculptors, who were executing the figures and other ornaments in sculpture, of the Duomo of Pisa and the chapel of S. Giovanni.<sup>1</sup> Among the many spoils of marbles brought home by the Pisan fleets

<sup>1</sup> The Baptistery.

<sup>2</sup> "Lives of Italian Painters."

were several antique sarcophagi, now in the Campo Santo of that town. One of these, on which the Chase of Meleager, hunting the Calydonian boar, was cut with great truth and beauty, surpassed all the others, the nude as well as draped figures being perfect in design and executed with great skill. Niccola, considering the excellence of this work, which greatly delighted him, applied such diligence in imitating that style, studying carefully both the sarcophagus and other excellent sculptures, that before long he was considered the best sculptor of his time."

A short stone's throw from the Baptistery is the entrance to the Campo Santo, and in a moment you are within the famous cloistered inclosure, built by Niccola's son Giovanni at the end of the thirteenth century. The soil of it is holy indeed, brought in sixty ships from the Holy Land itself, and many worthy men of olden time are buried here. But it is not for the sake of their memories that you have come. With little more than a passing thought of the forgotten dead who rest here, you walk along through the lovely Gothic cloisters, marveling at the frescoed walls and the stone relics of ancient days, until you come to the very sarcophagus that Niccola studied so earnestly six hundred years ago. It looks old certainly, but not worn, and it must be quite unchanged since the thirteenth century. There, still, is Meleager hunting the Calydonian boar, and with it another relief that Niccola certainly also studied and used, telling the story of Hippolytus and Phaedra. The work is all good, quite evidently done at a time when the Greek hand had not yet lost its cunning, when Greeks and Greek-taught Italians still took their models from life and their ideals of

art from the fifth and fourth century masters. In the chase of Meleager there is the clear echo of the Parthenon frieze. Life, movement, ease, and grace are in every line. So one may still enter somewhat into the point of view of the discerning sculptor who with all his Byzantine training pored over these figures and saw their beauty. *Somewhat*, indeed, for how little can we appreciate after all the courage, the clearness of artistic vision, the strength and stubbornness of soul that deliberately revolted against convention, and tried to make his Madonna and his saints lifelike and beautiful like these Roman figures of a thousand years back.

Just for a moment clap wings to your shoulders and flit away across country to the lovely old city of Siena. Light in front of the exquisite Gothic cathedral, and walk up its aisle by the great black and white striped pillars till you stand by another pulpit, a larger and more elaborate one than that which you have been studying in the Pisan Baptistry. It is Niccola's second<sup>1</sup> piece of work since his study of the old sarcophagus. The Pisan pulpit had tested his hand and eye, and his work on it had both convinced him that he was right and taught him valuable lessons. Moreover, people came and marveled at it, rejoicing at its beauty. So when the sculptor was given a similar task by the Siennese he followed a similar plan and worked it out more perfectly. The figures of the Pisan pulpit are a little bit too much like things copied—they lack spontaneity and ease—and their stiffness and stateliness and statuesque pose lack the soft, human touch of ideally

<sup>1</sup>This is not quite accurate. Between the two pulpits comes in chronological order the "Arca di S. Domenico" at Bologna, a sarcophagus with six compartments of reliefs. The similarity of plan of the pulpits gives a better basis for comparison, however.

Christian work. But the change that you look for is most wonderfully evident in this second attempt. The artist's hand is sure now, the Madonna is a real mother, not a stately, emotionless matron, the faces are sweet and rounded, the figures graceful and natural, so that you feel at once that the genius of this Pisan sculptor has seized with sure grip on the old ideals of beauty and truth, applied them with skill and sympathy to the treatment of a Christian subject, and definitely launched Italian art on a new era. You will feel this more clearly still if you look at an earlier relief—purely medieval—that is set into the wall about thirty feet from the pulpit. It represents the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Magi, and the flight into Egypt. You may stand there and look at the older representation of the Nativity with its clumsy, ill-proportioned forms, its absurdly hideous faces, its total lack of artistic sense, and then simply turn your head and let your eye rest on the graceful, satisfying lines, the natural, though crowded, grouping, and the real beauty and truth of Niccola's rendering of the same subject. One look will be sufficient.

It will be worth your while if you have time to carry on still further your study of these beginnings of Renaissance sculpture. You will find that with the technical skill and sense for finish which had never been lost, these sculptors, as soon as they really grasped the significance of this new ideal of naturalness and beauty, this return rather to Greek and Roman principles and models, progressed towards real excellence with amazing speed. The vigorous life of the Gothic art, which was creating such exquisite forms of beauty north of the Alps, was filtering into Italy also, and gave an added vitality to the message

and work of the Pisans. The reliefs on the great fountain at Perugia, done by Niccola in his old age, aided by his brilliant son Giovanni, have a grace and life that in themselves leave nothing to be desired. The modeling is practically perfect. Variety and progress will still be possible in regard to the artistic message, the *content*, and there will be varying power of rendering perspective in relief, of stimulating the imagination, of conveying force, of making ideal forms of beauty. But the possibility of all this—of Orcagna, of Ghiberti, of Donatello, of Verrocchio, and of Michelangelo himself—lay implicit in this pioneer work of Niccola the Pisan. It is interesting to see him at Orvieto working in actual contact and competition with some of those German workmen who were helping to bring the Gothic stimulus to Italy. It was once when he was on his way back to Tuscany from Naples, that he passed through Orvieto, where they were building the great church of S. Maria. Here he “worked in the company of some Germans, making figures in high relief in marble for the front of that church, and more particularly a Last Judgment, comprising both Paradise and Hell; and as he took the greatest pains to render the souls of the blessed in Paradise as beautiful as he possibly could, so he introduced into his Hell the most fantastic shape of devils imaginable, all intent on tormenting the souls of the damned. In this work not only did he surpass the Germans who were working there, but even himself, to his great glory.”

Before you leave Pisa you will study also the works of Niccola’s son, the brilliant, impetuous Giovanni, who did so much to carry on his father’s work, who perhaps even more consciously and vigorously abandoned conventional

models for living ones, and whose great Duomo pulpit<sup>1</sup> shows the stage that Pisan sculpture had reached when Andrea carried it to Florence.<sup>2</sup> But all this you leave to a more convenient season. For in your strolling through the cloisters you find a fresco that turns your thoughts for the moment in another direction. It is the great picture of "The Triumph of Death," once ascribed to Orcagna, the most fearsome and realistic interpretation in Italian art of the most terrible side of medieval Christianity.

Here in the foreground is a party of gay cavaliers in crimson and gold, with proud, stately horses and eager, straining hounds, all bound for the hunt, when suddenly they come upon a terrible spectacle in their very path. Three coffins containing three decaying corpses, one of them wearing a kingly crown, lie there in all their horror, one of them almost a skeleton, and foul serpents twining about the other two. In the background, oblivious both of worldly vanity and the mortality of the flesh, are pious hermits, men who have abjured the pomp and pride of the world and to whom death is as nothing. One of them milks a goat, another reads from a holy book by the steps of a tiny chapel—reads aloud, apparently, for another leans on crutches near by in an attitude of devout attention. To these death, when it comes, will bring no sting, only a welcome entrance into a brighter, happier world. But from a cliff above, unseen by the hermits or by a deer that lies near by, break gusts of fierce flames. Over them hover frightful bat-winged forms holding naked souls

<sup>1</sup> See Ruskin's comments on the pulpits of Niccola and Giovanni in "Val D'Arno."

<sup>2</sup> Andrea, the third great Pisan sculptor, may be studied best, perhaps, in the panels of the great bronze doors that he made for the Baptistry at Florence.

DETAIL FROM THE "TRIUMPH OF DEATH"  
Fresco by Andrea Orcagna in the Campo Santo of Pisa





who are about to be plunged into the fiery openings. Here all together you may see the pride of the world, the horror of death, the peace of the holy life, and the terrors of Hell.

Now you pass on and reach the central part of the picture. Here is Death himself, draped and winged, holding a great scythe. Behind him and unnoticed by him are aged, crippled, mutilated, and diseased forms—men and women yearning for death and holding out entreating arms to the dread power that will not release them from their misery. Instead, he is turning with fierce eyes and uplifted blade towards a group of youths and maidens who are making merry together with their pets, their music, their joyous converse, all unknowing. Beneath the figure of Death lie heaped together a crowd of his victims. Bishops and kings, lords and ladies, priests and laymen, lie there still enough, and from their mouths their souls are coming, little and naked, to be seized by devils or angels according to their destiny. Great hairy green and red monsters are these devils, with hideous beast faces, sharp, webbed claws, huge flapping ears, and they grip their victims with yells of joy, to bear them off to the flaming caverns in the hillside. One poor soul with a shaven crown is suspended in mid-air, an angel grasping his arms and a devil his feet. The fearsome beast has his jaws wide open, as if he might be howling forth curses, but another angel is hastening towards them with outstretched arm, so one may have hopes that the fiend is to be discomfited and the distressed soul rescued. Those who are being borne safely to Paradise by angels have their hands clasped in prayer, as well they might.

A little further along the wall is a Last Judgment, and

a most terrifying representation of Hell itself. Altogether, one feels that the relatives of those who are buried here must have had stout hearts indeed if they could visit the graves of the departed, albeit buried in the holiest of soil, and gaze on these things without quakings of spirit and much inward searching. They represented a perfectly real thing to the medieval mind. Each terrified beholder, as he gazed shrinking and yet fascinated on those helpless souls rising from the dead mouths, might dream of the time that would surely come when Death's scythe would at last reach him, too, when prayer and priestly intercession would avail no longer, and when if no angel came to save him, nor crown nor tonsure, nor silk robes nor mitre, would save him from the awful grip of those fiendish claws. Many sober faces and evil dreams must these frescoed walls have caused in the four centuries or more since they were painted. One wonders whether the heart of the painter himself must not have been smitten by his horrible imaginings, or whether indeed he would lay down his brush from the coloring of a demon's jaw or tail and pass worldly jests with frivolous companions over the good red Chianti. Who knows? Dante himself knew somewhat of the joys of the world, even though men said that his black hair had been curled and his face darkened by the heat and smoke of hell.

## CHAPTER V

### SIENA

Already your thoughts have turned once to Siena, where Niccola's great masterpiece stands. Now you go there, with full intent to give yourself up for a little while to the fascination of the lovely old city and get wholly rid of the memories of the Campo Santo demons. The journey itself will require some patience. If you go from either Pisa or Florence, you must change at Empoli and take an absurdly slow train for the south. Thereon you will meditatively rock and rumble, pausing frequently for long ruminations, past fields red with poppies, past hills crowned with little cities, past distant towers that were built only about six hundred years ago, until you come to the quiet city that was once the second state in Tuscany. As you drive along through the streets you pass a column bearing the Roman she-wolf and twins, for Siena was founded, saith tradition, by Senio, son of Remus, and her emblem has been for many ages that of Rome herself. Then you are landed before a comfortable house near St. Catherine's old church of San Domenico, and welcomed by a smiling Italian hostess, and you very soon discover in your soul a sense of satisfaction, of rest, of desire to stay where you are and revel, which few other cities in the length and breadth of Italy could give you.<sup>1</sup>

In due time you find yourself on the Via Cavour.

<sup>1</sup> See Edmond Gardner's "Siena," in the "Stories of Medieval Towns" series and W. D. Howells' "Panforte di Siena," in his "Tuscan Cities."

There is always a Via Cavour, no matter what the city may be, as there is always a Piazza Vittorio Emanuele, but no Via Cavour and no Piazza Vittorio Emanuele in other cities can at all be classed with those of Siena. The great statesman himself is but little in your thoughts as you stroll down the narrow winding street that bears his name. Some of the shop windows are in a mild way modern enough, but houses and streets suggest in the main a time far beyond Cavour or Mazzini or Napoleon or the Grand Dukes, and you drift back easily into the fourteenth century. Then as you walk on and turn without knowing it into the Via della Citta, you have one of the most entirely delightful surprises that even Italy could hold for you. Through an unexpected break in the stone buildings on your left, opens out all at once the great Piazza. In a glorious sweep it slopes down from you like the floor of a huge theater, and on the far side straight in front of you, rises the soaring tower of the Mangia.

You do not immediately descend from your point of vantage; the prospect from the upper rim of the Piazza is too exhilarating. But after a while you walk down towards the great brick Palazzo Communale that has stood there with its tower since the end of the thirteenth century, and enter, bent on exploration. It is the building that corresponds to the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, the old seat of government in the days when Siena was a prosperous city of one hundred thousand inhabitants, and an independent republic. But there is an air of deserted splendor, of long silence and disuse here that scarcely strikes you in the Palazzo Vecchio or in the Doges' Palace in Venice. Siena and her associations are more medieval and less Renaissance or modern than either

Florence or Venice. Her final fall, when it came in 1555, was more complete and irreparable than theirs. Their public buildings, old though they are, yet have some modern associations. Siena has none. Her Palazzo Communale has memories only of centuries long dead and half forgotten, and yet they are memories so proud and kept with such dignity that you walk through the old halls with no lack of reverence, indeed with a feeling that in some council room, you may, at any moment, come upon a group of white-bearded, hawk-eyed senators, gravely debating affairs of state.

Most of the frescoes are fairly to be called archaic, not pre-Giotto, but fourteenth century. You reap some martial joy from the warlike pictures of Spinello Aretino,—from one particularly, not as warlike as the others, representing the Doge of Venice and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa holding the stirrups of Pope Alexander III. The point whereof is that said pope was a Sienese, and that much joy warmed the hearts of the proud burghers of Siena at the sight of Doge and Emperor doing honor to their fellow-townsman. The same famous story of the "Peace of Venice" between Pope and Emperor, only emphasizing the legendary humiliation of Barbarossa, you will meet in Venice on the walls of the Ducal palace itself, only a stone's throw from the spot where the proud pontiff was fabled to have placed his foot upon the neck of the humbled Cæsar. But here in Siena the story has the flavor of pride of city added to that of country and church.

In another room are three frescoes that give you a pleasure half similar to that of solving a puzzle. They are allegorical, and endeavor to portray the ideals of government. One of them shows a grave King sur-

rounded by virtues, and with a procession of citizens coming to the foot of his throne. At the other side of the picture, balancing the figure of the King, is Justice, with Concord at her feet, Wisdom hovering above her head, and attendant spirits dispensing rewards to the good and punishment to the wicked. From the hand of Justice you can trace a cord passing down through Concord, through the line of citizens and running up to terminate in the King's scepter. Behold the moral! The Monarch's power, embodied in his scepter, comes to him from his people, but is based ultimately on Concord, which comes from Justice inspired by Wisdom! On another wall is a series of scenes representing flourishing towns, fertile fields, and happy groups of people, showing the results of good government. On a third are barren fields, a disconsolate and scanty population, men quarreling, and general desolation, all of which comes from bad government. So that the total effect of the three frescoes should have been a constant appeal to the rulers of Siena to be mindful of their duty. One wonders how often it was heeded. At all events, these with the frescoes in the Spanish Chapel of Santa Maria Novella, are the most famous allegorical paintings in Italy, and they quite repay study.

From the Palazzo Communale you walk across the square to a fountain which is itself worth coming to Siena to see, but which can be described in detail with but little profit. It is the famous Fonte Gaja decorated by reliefs carved in marble by Jacopo della Quercia. You will meet his work again at Bologna, but you are not likely anywhere to see better illustrations of this greatest of Michelangelo's predecessors than here in Siena. These reliefs

are not the originals: those are in the museum that you will see later, near the Cathedral, the Opera del Duomo. But the originals are in woefully worn and battered condition, and the copies seem to an untutored mind—in spite of Ruskin's great authority—to give one far more of the sculptor's actual message than do the mutilated fragments of Jacopo's own making. The one best worth studying you will see also reproduced over the door of the Duomo library, the "Expulsion from Paradise." In this you will perhaps verify that incautious phrase just used a moment ago—"the greatest of Michelangelo's predecessors." Not, remember, the greatest of Italian sculptors before Michelangelo; perhaps Ghiberti, Donatello or Verocchio might indignantly and successfully contest such a statement. But of those who in a special sense taught the genius of Michelangelo to follow its mighty path Jacopo della Quercia, in this "Expulsion from Paradise," most nearly fore-shadowed the figures of the Sistine and the "Moses" itself. Adam and Eve have here the same strength, the same intense vitality, the same marvelous expression of tearing, consuming emotions in outward form that we associate with Michelangelo. The other reliefs on the fountain are well worth careful study too, and in proportion as you have their strong lines firmly in mind will you be able soon to approach the masterpieces of the Sistine ceiling.

If in an actual visit you could thus long postpone a look at the cathedral your patience could only be explained by your ignorance. Yet one must in a sense envy you that very ignorance. First impressions are by no means always the best or even the dearest, but still they are the first, and as such have a certain exhilaration about them

sometimes that you would like to have repeated, if it were possible. You mount the slope to the Via della Citta again, turn to your left up the Via dei Peregrini, march on past the enticing looking door of S. Giovanni, turn a sharp bend, and lo! the Duomo itself! There is a stone seat running round the side of the square, and so you seat yourself as luxuriously as may be directly in front of the great façade and try to study its detail. Few architectural studies in Europe are more fascinating. But what an utterly hopeless task it would be to attempt for a moment to describe it! To the first amazed sweep of the eye it stands out in the bright sunlight as a great blaze of lovely color. Then as it takes shape you see the Gothic lines designed by Niccola's son Giovanni Pisano, the three gables filled each with a bright colored mosaic, the statues and pillars of curious stones, and all the richly ornate beauty that master artists could devise by cunning harmonies of red, black and white marble.

How it is that the human mind can take pleasure now in the simple lines of a Greek temple and again in the infinitely detailed adornment of this cathedral might be hard to say. The truly classic eye might be troubled at this riot of color. Witness Mr. Joseph Addison, who stood here something over two hundred years ago.<sup>1</sup> "There is nothing in this city," he says, "so extraordinary as the cathedral, which a man may view with pleasure after he has seen St. Peter's, though it is quite of another make, and can only be looked upon as one of the masterpieces of Gothic architecture. When a man sees the prodigious pains and expense, that our forefathers

<sup>1</sup> He would see the church as it is now except for the mosaics in the gables. They were added in 1878.

have been at in these barbarous buildings, one cannot but fancy to himself what miracles of architecture they would have left us had they been only instructed in the right way." What, one wonders, would the good Spectators' conception of "the right way" have been! He goes on gravely and profitably enough, "One would wonder to see the vast labor that has been laid out on this single cathedral. The very spouts are laden with ornaments; the windows are formed like so many scenes of perspective, with a multitude of little pillars retiring one behind another; the great columns are finely engraven with fruits and foliage that run twisting about them from the very top to the bottom. The whole body of the church is chequered with different lays of white and black marble; the pavement curiously cut out in designs and scripture stories: and the front covered with such a variety of figures, and overrun with so many little mazes and labyrinths of sculpture, that nothing in the world can make a prettier show to those who prefer false beauties, and affected ornaments, to a noble and majestic simplicity."<sup>1</sup> And without any disparagement to Addison, whom all men love well, one may prefer the judgment of Mr. Howells, when he says that "if we had a little of that lavish loveliness in one structure in America, the richness of that one would impoverish the effect of all the other buildings on the continent."

Altogether you are inclined to rank this Duomo of Siena second to only one church in Italy, St. Mark's in Venice. It is bewildering to reflect that the present nave was planned as the transept of a mighty church whose vastness would have surpassed anything that the world has

<sup>1</sup> Works. (New York, 1859), Vol. II., p. 314.

yet dreamed of. The great design was checked by the terrible pestilence of 1348, the Black Death. In four months that awful plague carried off eighty thousand of the population of Siena. Within the walls once crowded with houses there are now great areas of tilled land where empty and desolate sections of the city were set on fire and cleared of dwellings after the pest. One wonders how the stricken city could possibly have recovered itself sufficiently to complete the cathedral even on its reduced plan.

You are within the building now, walking up the great nave. Your feelings of repose are greatly hindered by the regular horizontal black stripes, the alternate rows of black and white marble in walls and columns. But even if the interior has not the glorious beauty of the exterior, it is impressive beyond most churches, a fit memorial of Siena in her prime. There beneath the dome is the great pulpit that you compared not long ago with its maker's first masterpiece in Pisa. And here is a little chapel that is well worth some study, the Capella San Giovanni, with Donatello's bronze "John the Baptist" and five beautiful little frescoes by Pinturicchio. One of these especially you will not soon forget. It is Alberto Aringhieri, Knight of Malta, kneeling in prayer on a thick carpet of grass and flowers with the walls and towers of a fair city in the distant background, framed in by rugged cliffs and tropical looking trees nearer at hand. The noble face of the young knight, the red cross on his breast, the bright armor, the idealized beauty of city and landscape, leave with you a singularly complete and pathetic interpretation of the best sides of the age of chivalry,—that age of chivalry which was even then passing away, if it had not already ceased to be.

Only a step from the little chapel is the door leading to the great library of the cathedral. You have been told that there are frescoes there illustrating scenes in the life of the famous Sienese pope, Pius II., better known as *Aeneas Sylvius*. They are the work of Pinturicchio, the painter of your "Knight of Malta," so you anticipate possible pleasure. You enter,—and what a wonder is this! You find yourself in a tumult of ecstasy more immediate and altogether delightful than any pictures in Italy have hitherto been able to arouse in you. It is indeed a quite unreasonable and objectionable ecstasy, for Pinturicchio is not at all one of the greatest masters, and these frescoes of his are by no means looked upon with favor by critics. "As figure-painting," says our infallible Berenson, "they scarcely could be worse. Not a creature stands on his feet, not a body exists; even the beauty of his women's faces, has through carelessness and thoughtless, constant repetition, become soured; as color these frescoes could hardly be gaudier or cheaper." Can this be true? Why perhaps it is. And yet strangely enough, you care not one whit, for you have been transported of a sudden into fairyland; you are back again in the golden age of childhood, buried in a most enchanting picture-book; no small pictures either, but great bright-colored sections of wall that by the very glory of their broad space and gay figures laugh at criticism and carry you into a magic country long unvisited. Jocund memories of Grimm and the "Arabian Nights" throng upon you and you eagerly drink in the joy of this pictured tale of *Aeneas Sylvius*. You know little of him, but that matters nothing. He was doubtless a prince aided by a genie or by a fairy godmother, ultimately bound to wed a beautiful princess.

Here is joyous company surely, gay ladies and gayer gentlemen gathered on prancing horses to celebrate the hero's departure for the Council of Basle. At least so they say, though to you it seems more like a wedding-feast or some like festival. But your eye runs over the heads of steeds and merrymakers and your heart beats fast as you think you recognize a background you love well in a favorite tale of Kenneth Grahame's. The familiar words come back to you,—words that you had always felt must be the description of a real picture. “Meadow-land came first, set with flowers, blue and red, like gems. Then a white road ran, with wilful uncalled-for loops, up a steep conical hill, crowded with towers, bastioned walls, and belfries; and down the road the little knights came riding two and two. The hill on one side descended to water, tranquil, far-reaching and blue; and a very curly ship lay at anchor, with one mast having an odd sort of crow's nest at the top of it.”<sup>1</sup> How often you have turned over the words in your mind for very joy of exquisite phrase and dainty picturing, and now could this be the very hill and city? Alas, no, and yet the spirit of the words is the spirit of the picture. There are the little ships riding at anchor, the fairy towers and battlements, and there is the white, many curved road winding up the hill,—all bathed in the clear air and radiant light that make care or pain, evil or foulness seem impossible, quite of another and lower world. Alas for the little hill towns of Italy! How far are they from this ideal brightness and peace! How often have their narrow streets run blood, and their walls echoed to moan and merciless war cry! Yet they had their peaceful times too, and since the sunny

<sup>1</sup> “Its walls were as of Jasper,” in Kenneth Grahame's “Dream Days.”

Italian nature forgets quickly they were doubtless often as happy and bright as this one that is “emptied of its folk” on so fair a morning to bid farewell to *Aeneas Sylvius*.

But one cannot describe a pleasure so purely one of fancy, of delight in bright color, of joyous romance. After all some grave persons might look at your unconcealed glee with wonderment and scorn. What unseemly rejoicings, they would say, over pictures that are not at all to be ranked with the masterpieces of Perugino before which you stood quite unmoved a few days ago in Perugia! Will you go with the same joy do you think from room to room frescoed by Raphael in the Vatican? Or will you revel so openly in Titian, in Leonardo, in Michelangelo? And if you must sorrowfully shake your head, are you not confessing to a depraved delight in gaudy mediocrity? It is a serious charge, but if it is true one must be honest about it; pretense is never more vulgar and out of place than in the presence of great art. Yet you do not believe that it is true, somehow. You do not rank Pinturicchio with Leonardo, but two things Pinturicchio has given you for which you genuinely give thanks,—a genius not easily surpassed for showing you the largeness, the exhilarating openness of the world, and a care-free joy of soul which shines through all the poor drawing and gaudy coloring pointed out by the critic. For this enlargement of vision, for this breath of fresh air, for these bright faces and sunny landscapes you rejoice without shame. The world would surely be far brighter if only the weak, the tired, the disheartened of all lands, could come and renew their childhood, not with Cinderella and the Giant-Killer, but with *Aeneas Sylvius* and his gay company in this cathedral library of old Siena.

Just a look now into the Opera del Duomo, the cathedral museum. There are many precious things here, but you may take time for only one just now,—one great painting that you must certainly see before you enter upon the study of the great Florentine painters. In Florence the fame of Cimabue and Giotto obscures all other artists of their time; to the Florentines Cimabue gloriously ended the line of ancient painters and launched the new era on its course with his great pupil. And the personality and influence of Giotto justify such an idea so largely that it is hard to find much fault with it. All that our visit to this picture in Siena will do will be to illustrate the truth that a great man is seldom altogether isolated in his thought and work. There is a mysterious but very real solidarity about human progress, and you will render poor justice to a great leader if you try to interpret him as a phenomenon quite independent of his fellows. His genius is doubtless his own, but its fruitfulness, its success, and even the path it takes, are dependent largely on the subtle movements of heart and mind in those about him. Shakespeare was not the only great Elizabethan dramatist. Titian was not the only great Venetian painter. Cromwell was not the only great upholder of the rights of Englishmen against Charles I. And Giotto was not the only Tuscan of his time who was eagerly reaching forward to a new realism, a new beauty in art.

On the second floor of the Opera del Duomo, then, is the great "Majestas" Madonna with the Holy Child and certain saints, painted about six centuries ago by Duccio di Buoninsegna, and placed over the high altar of the cathedral with the inscription in Latin—*Holy Mother of God, do thou grant peace to the Sienese and life to Duccio,*

*who has thus painted thee.*<sup>1</sup> Beside the Madonna is the far more interesting series of twenty-six smaller pictures representing the life of Christ. Every one of them will repay study. It is impossible to say of the figures in "The Three Marys" or "Christ in the Garden" or "The Betrayal," that there is decoration but no reality in them, dignity but no perspective, devotion of spirit but no attempt at real composition. Duccio shows an unquestionable sense for reality, perspective and natural groupings. He was no mere decorator, and the new light shines through his stiff figures with a distinctness and power only obscured to later generations by the radiant genius of Giotto. Let him by no means be forgotten, then. He lacked the Florentine's sense for beauty, and he had not the vitality or the touch of poetry that you feel in the frescoes of Assisi or the Arena Chapel in Padua. But he was a worthy artist, one of the notable pioneers, and you will understand the genius of Giotto himself the better for your little study of his great contemporary of Siena.

If you walk directly from the Duomo to the Church of S. Domenico, that is as directly as Italian streets ever permit one to walk, you will have to descend into a hollow and then laboriously climb a steep incline on the other side. Siena, like the other wolf-city, was built on hills. You are going to enter for a moment into another phase of Sienese history and life, and that a very famous and important one. Siena as a proud republic, the greatest Tuscan rival of thirteenth-century Florence, whose citizens, allied with Florentine exiles, overthrew the Florentine Guelfs themselves at Montaperti in 1260,—all this

<sup>1</sup> Mater Sancte Dei sis causa Semis requies sis Duccio vita te quia dixit ita.

you saw reflected in the Palazzo della Signoria. The city's artistic pride, her love of the beautiful, her loyalty to the church, the wealth and public spirit which prevailed in her during the century after Montaperti, you have seen in the cathedral. Her contribution to early Tuscan painting you have studied in the Opera del Duomo. Now you are to enter the church which is inseparably associated with the famous saint for whom Siena would doubtless have cheerfully sacrificed all of her other glories, the blessed St. Catherine.

As you stand by the church of S. Domenico, look across the valley just for a moment at the cathedral. It is one of the views that you will be least likely to forget,—the red-tiled roofs sweeping up the hill and topped by the glorious marble church with its Campanile. But then you turn and enter the quiet, somber building beside you and in a moment you are standing by the chapel of St. Catherine. The great Lombard painter Sodoma has left some of his finest paintings here to aid the imagination of the devout, and the church is so very quiet that it is not hard to idealize the good saint who used to stand here in holy meditation. It was in this chapel that she received the Stigmata, the marks of Christ's suffering, to the pious joy of her Dominican associates. The good friars had long mourned the preference in this regard which had been shown to the founder of the rival order of Franciscans, and they welcomed with grateful *Te Deums* the miracle which proclaimed the sanctity of St. Catherine equal to that of St. Francis. In Sodoma's pictures the artist's quick feeling for beauty has perhaps overcome his sense of fitness. A Florentine like Filippino Lippi might have better represented the emaciation, the triumph of soul

over body in the saint who at the age of six flogged herself habitually, who at the age of twelve abandoned the use of meat, at the age of fifteen wine, at the age of twenty bread, living on uncooked vegetables; who lived three years without speaking; and who wore a chain of iron until it ate into her flesh. But if Sodoma's pictured face of St. Catherine is not quite the thin, restrained face of the ascetic who wore herself to death at thirty-three, yet its sweet ethereal beauty doubtless represents truly enough the gentle lady's real beauty of soul. As she prays for the beheaded criminal whose soul you may see borne to heaven by angels, as she sinks fainting beneath the agony of the Stigmata, as she gazes up in ecstasy at the radiant vision of the Madonna and Child, the pure, pale countenance gives you a message of real saintliness and beauty that perhaps no one but Raphael could have interpreted so rarely as Sodoma does here.

In a silver reliquary is preserved the head of the saint. Poor St. Catherine's mortal remains are much scattered. Mr. Howells, on the authority of the *Diario Senese* of Girolamo Gigli, places one of her fingers in the Certosa at Pontignano, "where it has been seen by many to their great advantage, with the wedding-ring of Jesus Christ upon it. Her right thumb is in the church of the Dominicans at Camporeggi; one of her ribs is in the Cathedral at Siena; another in the church of the Company of St. Catherine, from which a morsel has been sent to the same society in the city of Lima in Peru; her cervical vertebra and one of her slippers are treasured by the Nuns of Paradise; in the monastery of Saints Dominic and Sixtus at Rome is her right hand; her shoulder is in the convent of St. Catherine at Magnanopoli; and her right foot is in

the church of San Giovanni e Paolo at Venice. In St. Catherine at Naples are a shoulder bone and a finger" and so on, to the great marvel of any poor modern who tries to be guided by the light of reason. But one must not be prejudiced against the saint on account of this veneration of her bones. There are many worse things in the world than the reverence paid to a St. Francis or a St. Catherine. Did not the great and good St. Augustine aver that the bones of St. Stephen wrought seventy miracles in his diocese, five of them being resurrections of the dead? Why should we of little faith deny the same virtue to the bones of this good Saint of Siena? "Here," says the tablet on the chapel wall, "she remained withdrawn from the world, listening to the divine services of the Church, and here continually in divine colloquy she conversed familiarly with Jesus Christ, her Spouse. Here leaning against this pilaster, she was rapt in frequent ecstasies; wherefore this pilaster has ever since been potent against the infernal furies, delivering many possessed of devils."

Towards the evening of one lovely day you stroll through the little park, the Lizza, and out on the earth-works of Duke Cosimo's old fortress of Santa Barbara. It was built by Siena's conqueror soon after the dreadful siege which ruined her and almost depopulated her. But the tragic memories of a time so long past are softened by time, and the dusty Italian soldiers who are drilling in the court-yard, the stoutly-blowing bandsmen who are practicing on their instruments in some concealed corner, are quite oblivious of the cruel Spaniards or mercenaries who threw up these ramparts long ago at the command of the Florentine tyrant. The drill hour ends. The

young soldiers straggle off to their welcome rest. The last brazen blasts from the band close the discordant noises from beneath your perch. You are left with the distant fields, the orchards just below you, the city with its Duomo and its soaring Mangia tower,—all full of memories of old Siena. Then as from the box thickets of the Villa Medici in Rome, and as from the cool shelters of the Boboli gardens in Florence, breaks from a grove the prelude of a nightingale, true and sweet and full-toned as the song of the wood-thrush in the woods at home. You let your spirit go out to it, and the old fancy of the bird's immortality comes back to fit into your musings about the fair old city, and its age upon age of brave life. The music of Keats' verse makes fit accompaniment to the rich notes now pouring out in loveliest melody from the hidden perch among the leaves.

*"Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down ;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown :  
Perhaps the self-same song that jound a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amidst the alien corn ;  
The same that oft-times hath  
Charmed magic easements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn."*

## CHAPTER VI

### FLORENCE: FROM DANTE TO BOCCACCIO

As you take your stand on the heights of Fiesole and look down on the valley of the Arno and the city of Florence, you see a city very different from the one that Dante knew. The great cathedral dome, the lovely bell tower, the heavy brown palaces would all be strange to him. Only the outline of the surrounding hills, the curve of the river, an old bridge, a spire, a tower, and perhaps the general aspect of the red-tiled roofs would be familiar to the poet's keen eye if he could see them now. His friend Giotto would indeed recognize another landmark, the tower of the Palazzo Vecchio, but its gray walls were still rising under the direction of Arnolfo when Dante was exiled in 1302; Giotto's Campanile was only begun when its designer himself died in 1336, fifteen years after Dante; and the age of the great builders—the Medici, the Pitti, the Strozzi—was all yet to come. Other towers would still be standing, though, when the fourteenth century opened, that have vanished now,—the towers from which powerful families and their retainers watched and fought during the great feuds that so shook and tortured thirteenth-century Florence; and the great seer would in vain now strain his eyes to descry some sign of the too familiar brawls and battles of his time, or his ears to catch the well-known war-cries of the rival houses.

For the Florence of Dante was far from being the care-free, well-behaved city that it is now; and his Italy

was far from enjoying its present happy state of peace and unity. You have already in Assisi thought over some of the things that tended to make the centuries from the fifth to the thirteenth an age of political and civil confusion and unrest, and the considerations that you dwelt on then you saw to be true to a greater or less degree of all Europe. But Italy for several reasons passed through experiences and developed conditions and tendencies which made her fortune very different from that of the rest of the continent. The Germans entered and influenced Italy as they did Gaul, Britain, and Spain, but no tribe ever conquered Italy as entirely and permanently as the Franks did Gaul. The Ostrogoths and the Lombards almost did it, but both failed, the one in permanence and the other in completeness, and no power ever came to rescue Italy from confusion as the Normans in cruel mercy came to divided England. Instead of this she had the two empires, one at Constantinople and one north of the Alps, pulling her in different directions, and the great spiritual power of the papacy in her midst, none of them quite strong enough to overcome the others and unite the country in one coherent state. This lack of any prevailing unifying center strikes us all through the Middle Ages in Italy,—is perhaps the greatest single curse of the country.

Take, for instance, the life of Dante himself. If we could follow him in every detail of his career in Florence as citizen, partisan, member of the governing body,—in Arezzo as exile, passionately eager for return to his city,—in Verona as friend and dependent of a great lord, return to Florence put aside as a dream not to be treasured, brooding over torn and savagely quarreling Italy, pouring

out his great heart in immortal verse, now and then turning his pen or his voice into practical politics when he seemed to be needed,—if we could thus follow his life we should have a living appreciation of what Italy was in the later Middle Ages,—a group of little cities and states that remind us of ancient Greece in their intense local independence, their keen vitality, their restless ambition, and their bitter and cruel party divisions. Italy was intensely alive in that thirteenth century; that was its most hopeful characteristic; and that this life was real and fruitful was abundantly proved by the number of great men that she produced in rapid succession for the next three hundred years. But she was terribly and wastefully subdivided. The wars of Florence with Fiesole, like those of Athens with Salamis, are as if New York waged war on Newark, Boston on Gloucester or Marblehead. In Tuscany alone, a region smaller than Maryland and little larger than New Jersey, there might be a dozen cities in constant hostility, between whom at any moment the flame of fierce war might flash out. In the great confederacy that made war on Pisa in 1284, when Dante was nineteen years of age, that war which ended Pisa's greatness and almost annihilated her, there were five cities engaged, of whom the nearest to her was Lucca, ten miles distant, and the farthest Genoa, about ninety miles, practically the distance from Philadelphia to New York.

In all, one may say—and this is part of the reason for the constant quarrels—the same public questions existed: for pope or emperor; for prince or republic; for Italian independence or foreign intervention; for nobles or people. And the party uppermost in one city usually aided its

friends and fought its opponents in other cities. Imagine Tammany Hall leading the Democrats of New York to overthrow in battle the rampant Republicanism of Philadelphia, and you will have a home parallel of Guelf Florence seeking to destroy Ghibelline Siena. The origin of these two famous parties is of but little interest. The Guelfs stood in the main for jealousy of foreign influence, local and national pride, and conservative democracy; the Ghibellines, more doubtfully, for unity, for strong, centralized government, and for aristocracy. The Guelfs usually looked to the pope for a certain patronage and leadership, the Ghibellines to the emperor. But these main divisions were constantly obscured by special local conditions. A city whose enemy and rival was intensely Guelf was led simply because of that fact to range itself on the side of the Ghibellines, though they might be quite equal in patriotism and republican enthusiasm. A Ghibelline might find himself fighting against an emperor, or a Guelf against the cause of the pope. Still the main party divisions were as just laid down.

Florence under normal conditions was decidedly Guelf. But there was a strong Ghibelline faction which was able to cause trouble and occasionally hold the upper hand. In 1249 the Guelf leaders were vanquished and exiled. In 1250 they returned and banished the Ghibellines. Ten years later, the Ghibellines, securing help from the German king of Sicily, son of an emperor (Frederick II.) and natural patron of the Imperial party, met the Florentine Guelfs in a great battle at Montaperti by the river Arbia, and won a victory that for the moment seemed final and crushing. But a French army, hostile to the emperor, and so hostile to the Ghibellines, marching south to the conquest of Sicily, soon

re-established the Guelfs, and Florence was a free Guelf republic when Dante Alighieri was born in 1265. It remained so during the rest of the century, so that it was as a Guelf that Dante rose to manhood and did his duties as citizen and magistrate up to his thirty-fifth year and after. But then the fatal Italian tendency to feud and dissensions split the Florentines again, and two rival families, the Cerchi and the Donati, began to trouble the city with their quarrels as the Montagues and Capulets did Verona in the days of Romeo and Juliet. In the neighboring city of Pistoia long before, a noble citizen after the death of his wife Bianca married again. The descendants of his first wife, who called themselves after her Bianchi, or Whites, gradually fell away from those descended from his second wife, who by way of marking themselves off from their cousins, called themselves Neri—Blacks. As these two divisions of a great family became ever fiercer and were a constant disturbance, Florence stepped in to try the part of conciliator, and it seemed best to her to move the heads of both families to Florence so that the heat of dissension might the more easily die away in Pistoia. Alas for good intentions! The heads of the Neri faction went to live with their friends the Donati; of the Bianchi went to the Cerchi, and the rival Florentine families at once took up the cause of their guests, adopting their distinctive party names. Florence now, instead of Pistoia, was split from top to bottom by the feud of Whites and Blacks. Dante was a White. Collision after collision between the two factions shook the city's peace. At last, after one or two changes of fortune, the Blacks remained victors, and Dante and the leading Whites went into lifelong exile. For a time they waited at Arezzo, plotting, hoping, turn-

ing even to the Ghibellines for help, until Dante, in despair, broke with them, and began the life of restless wandering that only ceased with his death in Ravenna in 1321.

One special point is perhaps worthy of a moment's attention here before you turn to other things,—Dante as a Ghibelline, a believer in the emperor. Dante is often called the great Ghibelline poet, and yet for a great part of his life he was entirely Guelf, and it may be doubted whether he ever considered himself a Ghibelline. It was only the misery of exile that threw him into the ranks of the Ghibellines, and it was as an exile, feeling bitterly in his own person the anarchy and petty divisions of Italy, that he turned to the one hope of unity, the imperial power, and welcomed the emperor, Henry VII., when he descended from the Alps to try again to realize the hopeless dream of uniting Italy and Germany in one Empire. "Behold," cried Dante,<sup>1</sup> "now is the accepted time, in which the signs of consolation and peace arise. For a new day grows bright, revealing a dawn that already lessens the gloom of long calamity. Already the eastern breezes grow stronger; the lips of heaven grow ruddy and strengthen the auguries of the people with a caressing tranquillity. And even we, who so long have passed our nights in the desert, shall behold the gladness for which we have longed. Then be ye all vigilant and rise up to meet your king!" A bright hope that faded before Dante himself died.

The "Divine Comedy" was begun before Dante's

<sup>1</sup> "Letter to the Princes and Peoples of Italy," in Latham's "Dante's Eleven Letters." Perhaps the most helpful and suggestive of all brief and accessible studies of Dante is the essay contained in Church's "Dante, and Other Essays."

exile in 1302, and gradually during the next nineteen years it took shape as the supreme interpretation of the age that was passing away. Some time you will study it in detail. One or two things you should note about it even now that will help to make clearer its place in the development of Italy. In the first place, it is well to see the significance of the intense reality of the future life, to Dante and to his age. Hell is painted with the detail and certainty of touch that one might expect in a description of Florence herself. The existence and character of the devils was no more to be questioned than the existence and character of the English or the Germans. And one realizes, too, that if all this is true, if Dante's Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise represent his fundamental conviction and that of his age, regarding the life after death, then they are right and natural in ignoring all things except those pertaining to salvation. If fleshly lusts, heresy, violence, worldly ambitions, mean eternal torment in a hell as real as this earth, only never ending, then nothing could be more foolish than the yielding to them, nothing more detestable than encouragement of them. The life of this world, with its fleeting pleasures, becomes a contemptible nothing—three-score years and ten beside eternity! The virtues that mean Paradise are above all else to be desired. The vices that mean Hell are above all else to be stamped out. It becomes of interest, then, to find out what according to Dante would condemn a man to Hell and what fit him for Paradise. Three main causes of condemnation you will find in even a first reading of the "Inferno"—malice, or badness of heart; the yielding to pleasures of the flesh in any form; and alienation from Christ and his Church. Thus, under the first head are condemned the evil tem-

pered, the defamers, even the crafty, like the noble but cunning Ulysses; under the second head the gluttons, the luxurious, or those like Francesca da Rimini, whom the world has gladly pardoned, but whom the stern poet condemns even while pitying; and under the third, the pagans of antiquity are condemned with modern unbelievers like Farinata or Cavalcanti, no matter what their virtues might be. In each case the judgment is unrelenting and absolute. Ignorance, private and public virtue are of no avail as excuses. Sins of the heart, of the flesh, and of the intellect that are unpardoned, definitely and absolutely condemn the sinner to unending torment. Here as elsewhere Dante's verdict is that of his age, rigid and uncompromising, with no concession to the moral standards of the world,—and note the result. Sins of the heart can only be purged by faith, by devotion, by unwearying self-denial and attention to the example of Christ and the saints. Sins of the flesh can only be conquered by a stern crucifying of the flesh, by asceticism, by turning away from the vanities of the world, by answering the tender appeals of the senses with the scourge and bitter austerities. Sins of the mind—questionings that may result in eternal hell—are only to be avoided by absolute faith in Christ and the voice of the Church. These are the logical results of Dante's creed. The man who lived up to it absolutely, the man worthy of Dante's Paradise, the St. Francis, the St. Dominic, the St. Louis of France, was in conduct a saint, and in the intellectual world a man who schooled himself never to ask the question *why*.

But if Dante reflects this lofty, uncompromising mediæval ideal and the sad inability of most men to at all attain it; if he portrays a system of creation which condemned

with terrible certainty the vast majority of mankind to eternal torment; if the law is to him so unyielding that popes are not saved by their tiara, nor poets and philosophers by their loftiness of soul, yet he himself shows all unconsciously the beginnings of the end of this stern, narrow attitude to life and eternity. For he painted it with such uncompromising and fatal clearness that whoever read the "*Inferno*" had, as it were, been there and talked with hell's woeful citizens. And human life, human emotions, human aims, and ways of looking at things, come in so visibly and humanly all through, that in spite of yourself you break through the hard theology of it, and find yourself following the narrative in eager sympathy here, in horror there, in warm contact with reality everywhere. Ideas, doctrines, systems, that are once clearly interpreted, are, just because man is infinite and because "his reach should exceed his grasp," ready at once to give way to ideas and systems that are larger and more adequate. "When the soul becomes visible, the body is ready to drop away."<sup>1</sup>

A curious instance of the new independence and individualism which is characteristic of Dante is in the third canto of the "*Inferno*." Dante, guided by Virgil, had barely entered the terrible gates when "strange tongues, horrible outcries, words of pain, tones of anger, voices deep and hoarse, and sounds of hands amongst them, made a tumult which turns itself unceasing in that air forever dyed, as sand when it eddies in a whirlwind. And I, my head begirt with horror, said: 'Master, what is this

<sup>1</sup>See the noble essay on Dante in Caird's "Literary and Philosophical Essays," vol. I. To those who have access to "Queen's Quarterly," vol. I., Watson's "Lectures on Dante" will also be most suggestive. They will doubtless be issued in book form soon.

that I hear? and who are these that seem so overcome with pain?" And he to me, "This miserable mode the dreary souls of those sustain, who lived without blame, and without praise. They are mixed with that caitiff choir of the angels who were not rebellious nor were faithful to God, but were for themselves. Heaven chased them forth to keep its beauty from impair; and the deep Hell receives them not, for the wicked would have some glory over them.'" How strangely modern is this conception of the "crew of caitiffs who never were alive, hateful to God and to his enemies." It is the idea of Kipling's "Tomlinson," of Browning's "Statue and the Bust," an emphasis of individualism, of that positive character development whose neglect may be more shameful than actual crime. Nothing could be more unmedieval.

Yet we must not press this so far as to suppose that this passionate Florentine who comforted his unresting mind in exile by painting his time in living semblance on the background of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, saw that he was helping to open the way to a new era. He was no more conscious of it than was St. Francis. His blows against the symbolism, the difficulty of thinking in a human earthly way, the stern theology, the indifference to individual development, the narrow horizon of thought, the neglect of liberal culture which were characteristic of the Middle Ages, were dealt all unconsciously. He was not a critic, but an interpreter. He shows us the thirteenth century and the coming tides of new thought too, but the signs of the new time are latent, implicit, unconscious. To quote the Master of Balliol again, "Dante interprets the religion of the cloister, in such a way as to

carry us beyond it. His *Divina Commedia* may be compared to the portal of a great cathedral, through which we emerge from the dim religious light of the Middle Ages into the open day of the modern world, but emerge with the imperishable memory of those harmonies of form and color on which we have been gazing, and with the organ notes that lifted our soul to heaven still sounding in our ears.”

And what of the art in which Florence was to shine with such splendor in the times to come? Surely the growing life that could produce Francis and Dante, and that could see in Pisa the revival of reality and beauty in sculpture, would act in some measure on the sister art of painting. Not that there was not some beauty in medieval painting. Much of the old technical skill had been handed down from generation to generation in Constantinople, and Byzantine masters or Italians who had studied under them, were, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, carefully and skilfully adorning churches throughout the peninsula with frescoes that still fascinate us with their quaint stateliness. They could do exquisite mosaic work too. And yet few who come to these old works of art for the first time are able to admire them. They seem to our eyes by no means beautiful, and quite dead in their stiffness and unreality. These Madonnas and saints have the shapes of women and men indeed, but they are painted in somber colors on a gold background, with heads always at an angle and with long, narrow eyes, without expression, without real human existence.<sup>1</sup> They were the product of a demand for church adornment that would awaken the souls of the worshipers to heavenly not earthly

<sup>1</sup> See the first chapter of Sir Martin Conway's “Early Tuscan Art.”

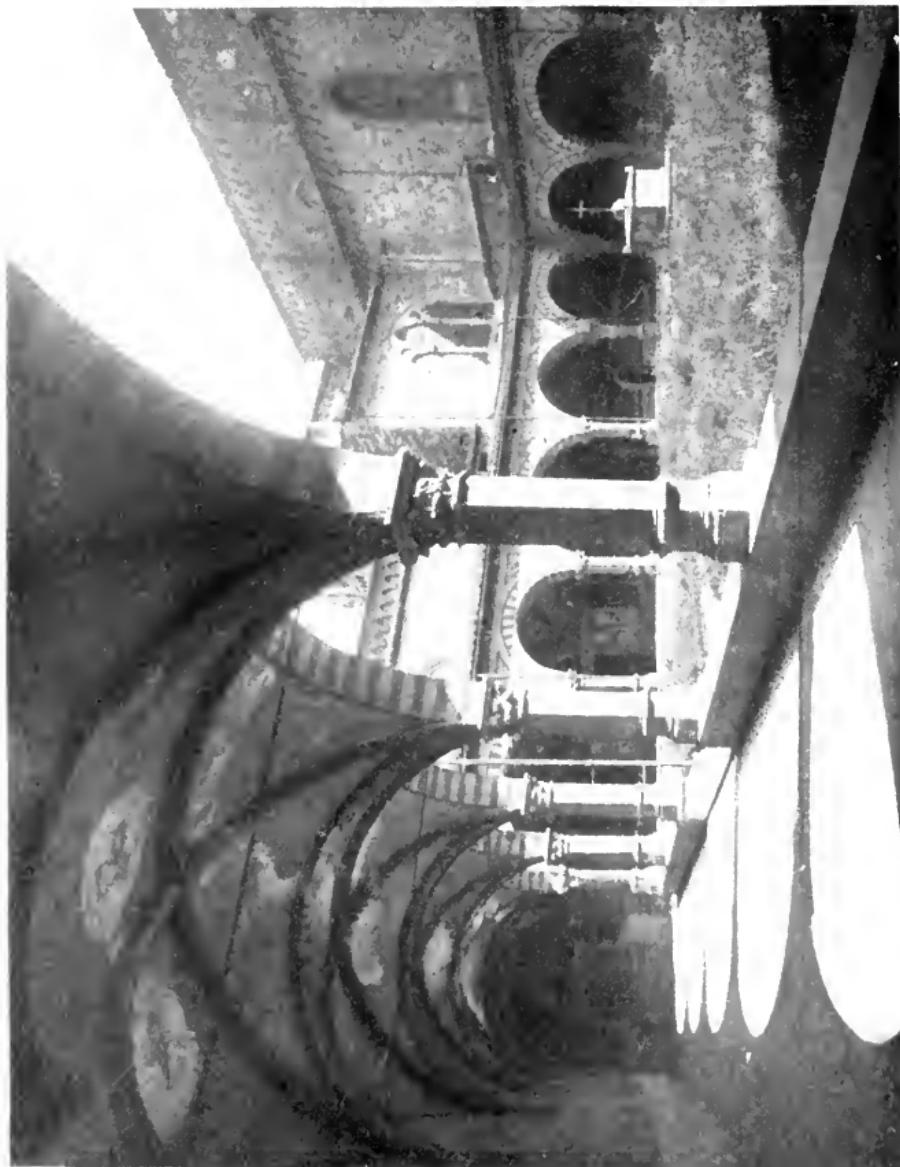
beauty; devotion, not pleasure of the eye; devout yearning for the life to come, not joy in this transient world with its temptations to momentary material bliss. The medieval artist, then, in so far as he was an artist, had a severe task before him. His only patron was the Church, and the Church demanded the elimination of both earthly beauty and reality. Nothing was left but such decorative beauty as would deepen the solemnity, the dignity, the mystery, the drawing of the mind to higher things and to the world to come that was deemed fitting in a building designed for the worship of God and the contemplation of Eternity. This much was attained in the best medieval art. It does add to the old churches a stately, pathetic, unearthly kind of beauty. But often the artist, taught to forget beauty of line and color and reality, compelled to adopt the severe standards handed down to him by his masters and demanded by the Church, produced only ugliness.

No freedom or life could be expected in painting until Europe should escape from the age of confusion, until her thoughtful men should have once more the realization that it was not the sole duty of mankind to propitiate an angry deity, and prepare for heaven. You are prepared to see this change coming in the thirteenth century, especially after your little study of Niccola Pisano. And you do not look in vain. For what saith our good friend Giorgio Vasari, our diligent sixteenth-century chronicler and gossiper? "The endless flood of misfortunes which overwhelmed unhappy Italy not only ruined everything worthy of the name of a building, but completely extinguished the race of artists, a far more serious matter. Then, as it pleased God, there was born in the year 1240, in the

city of Florence, Giovanni, surnamed Cimabue, to shed the first light on the art of painting."

In the great Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella—a church which contains more things of interest and profit than you will be able to glance at in your present study—you will find the famous old painting which tradition says was done by Cimabue and borne amid ecstatic rejoicings to its present home. Whether this is really Cimabue's<sup>1</sup> or whether it is another, done by a Sienese painter, Duccio, can matter very little to us. Cimabue, who was Giotto's master, has become really little more than a great name, to whom these works have been traditionally ascribed for centuries, and to whom we may still ascribe them for convenience. For we know nothing about them with certainty. We simply have Dante's testimony, "Once in painting Cimabue held the field, now all the cry is for Giotto," and very definite tradition to assure us that this great old Florentine was thought in his time to have gathered together in his work all that was great in the old methods and to have shadowed forth the coming artistic ideals of beauty and reality. In this Rucellai Madonna and in Duccio it is easier to see that here is the old Byzantine work at its best than to see the coming life. For with all the stateliness and pathos of the famous old picture, there is little beauty in it in the later sense. There is a Madonna in Assisi, indeed, said to be by Cimabue, that, with all its stiffness and slanting head and narrow eyes and gold background,

<sup>1</sup> It would be hard to find any painting that can with absolute certainty be ascribed to Cimabue. But Duccio of Siena, whom we may study in perfectly authentic works, belongs to the same age, and there are frescoes in Assisi too—in the church of St. Francis—which illustrate exactly the same features of artistic development that you find in the Santa Maria Novella Madonna—the Rucellai Madonna, as it is called.



MONASTERY OF SANTA MARIA NOVELLA, FLORENCE



is wonderfully impressive, and above in the upper church<sup>1</sup> a sadly blurred figure of Abraham, standing with uplifted knife over the altar, life and energy in every line. So with some of Duccio's groups there is an occasional abandonment of the old stiff unreality,—a real effort to see things as they are, which is a sure prophecy of the dawn of modern art. But it is prophecy only, not fulfilment. These old paintings are simply, after all, medieval art at its best, producing its fairest flower at the moment of perishing.

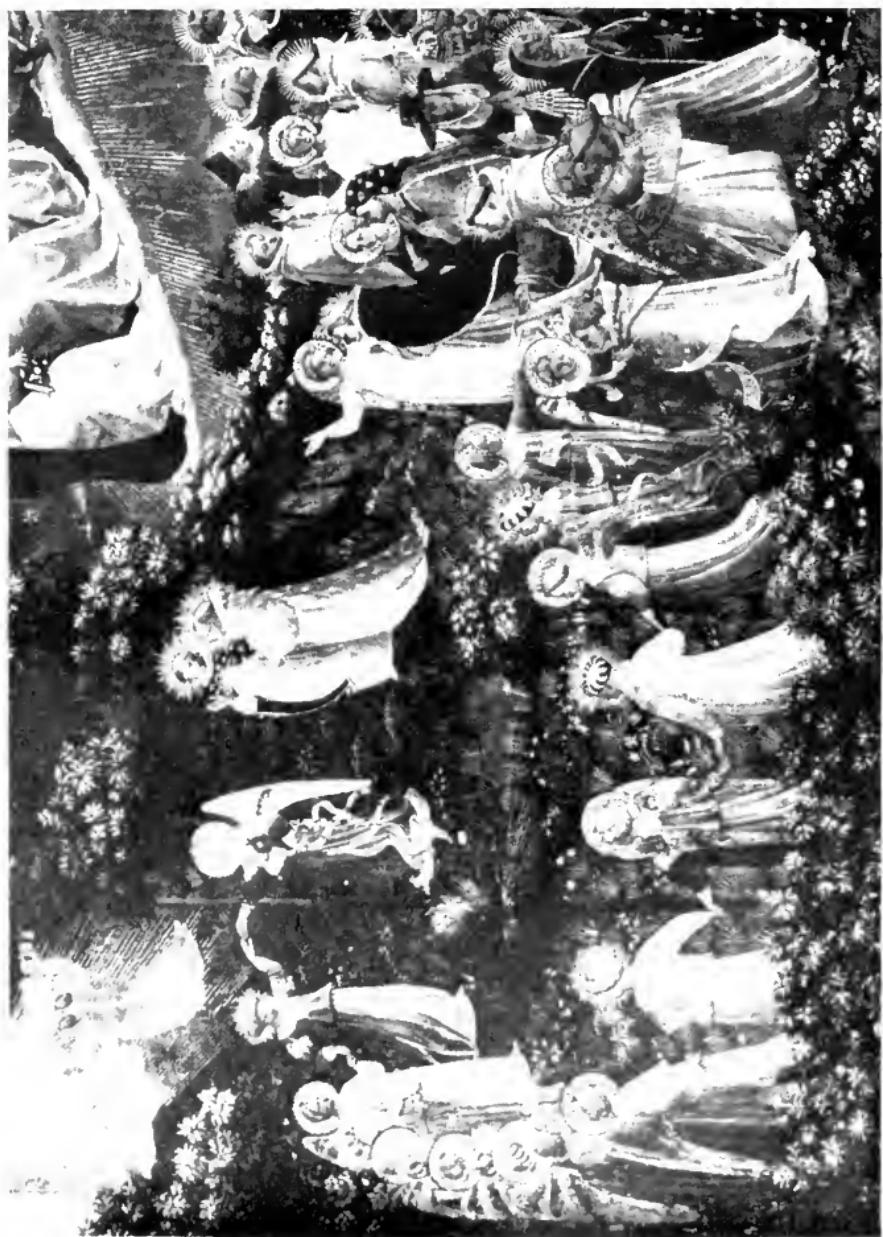
But if you are in Assisi, look from the Cimabue Madonna to the scenes from the life of St. Francis done a little later by Cimabue's pupil Giotto. Or if you are here in Florence go from the Rucellai Madonna to the Giotto frescoes in Santa Croce. Or later on, if you should be going to Venice, drop off at Padua and see Giotto's frescoes of scenes from the life of Christ. You will find in all these a totally new point of view. Here at last is a painter who tries to paint things as they are. He was first found by Cimabue, it is said, as a little shepherd boy, trying to draw one of his sheep on a smooth stone. It was a true omen of his mission as an artist. His figures are often stiff, it is true, and his faces have often the set look that recalls the Byzantine work. Even his perspective is none too perfect. But the real point is that he tries—with entire success too—to make his men and women living human beings, not decorative figures, that he tries to make his faces show forth human thoughts and emotions, not simply holy contemplation, and that he realizes that there is such a thing as perspective. At last

<sup>1</sup> There are two churches built on the same foundation known simply as the upper and the lower church of St. Francis. Both contain frescoes by Giotto and by the painters that preceded him.

human beauty and artistic reality were come to earth again. At last men's eyes were opened to the marvels that lay about and within them, to the earth beneath and around them as well as the heaven that might await their coming.

Giotto was more than a painter. All the world knows that we owe to him the lovely bell-tower that rose in the center of the city during the years that followed his death. He only lived to design and begin it, but that others could take his conception and carry it out in this marvel of grace and color is proof in itself that his spirit lived after him. No one came for a time who had at all his head, or eye, or brain, but there were many who had caught enough of the inspiration of his genius to work out the lessons he had taught them. Gradually men learned to draw the human form with surer and more living touch than of old, and to paint faces more open to the play of expression and more beautiful. Orcagna came, the maker of the tabernacle in Or San Michele and the painter of the beautiful angels of Santa Maria Novella. And Fra Angelico came, whose wonderful angel-faces and exquisite touches of fancy were, in their own way, never surpassed by any who followed. There is a lovely little painting of his in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, "The Naming of St. John," showing the blind old father of John the Baptist writing, "His name shall be called John," while the silent group who have brought him the news of his son's birth, stand waiting. It was painted probably within the fourteenth century, much less than a hundred years after Giotto's death. Every figure is alive and graceful. The wooden stiffness that Giotto had first driven away is utterly absent, and the set, drawn

Francesca di Giacomo  
ANGELS IN PARADISE  
Last Judgment, Academy of Fine Arts, Florence





faces of the old time have given place to sweet, rounded ones. Over the stone wall nod roses and through a passage way—with a perspective that has quite lost the appearance of effort—you catch a glimpse of grass and trees, a bright little hint of a garden that adds a most unexpected touch of fancy. It is true that the artist-friar has not a wide range of vision. He strayed little into the broad world, and his faces have more of a spiritual, heavenly beauty than those that one would easily find in the crowded city streets; but it was enough for him to make human forms angelic and the angels themselves human—to catch Giotto's lesson of reality, and make his fair visions womanly and manly, walking on a real and very fair earth, albeit they are of a more spiritual loveliness than one might usually find among mortals. And when one gazes on his angels circling about the throne or treading the flowery fields of paradise, one even of our late day may feel that this gentle seer of five hundred years ago has given us a heaven more full of grace and simple delight-someness than any other we have imagined. The variety, the glory, the myriad moods of the world, had yet to be discovered and portrayed, but Giotto, Orcagna, and Fra Angelico had surely found the secret of reality and beauty. Their successors had but to develop their lessons.

There are two other men who help one to understand this fourteenth century, and to get a clearer idea of its meaning and permanent results. Of one, Petrarch, you will be able to see something a little later when you glance for a moment at the revival of learning.<sup>1</sup> But his friend Boccaccio is best seen here in the company of artists who brought naturalness and life to painting, and a little study

<sup>1</sup> See chapter vii.

of him will help us to make clearer to ourselves the fundamental mission of them all. It seems strange at first sight to class Boccaccio with Fra Angelico. There is little in common, of a truth, between the angels of the Uffizi "Coronation" and the tales of the Decameron. And yet in widely different ways the saintly friar and the jovial novelist were leading Florentines and Italians to a common goal. As we may see clearly enough now, the spiritual world of Italy and Europe was passing through a difficult and painful crisis. The names Francis, Dante, Niccola, Giotto, Petrarch, Fra Angelico show us a spiritual current deep and strong, but not at once visible,—ultimately invincible, but subtle and slow-moving. And the waters were not easily stirred. The fresh stream of new vitality did not easily penetrate and awaken. For so many ages the earth had been to all serious and devout minds the playground of the devil, aye, and his working ground too, his peculiar domain, where any attitude of conciliation or contentment with worldly things on the part of the elect seemed a bowing to Satan. Beauty and pleasure were words and thoughts to be applied to heaven and to spiritual things, not to earth. Tribulation, not contentment,—unceasing struggle, not repose,—the crushing of the world and the flesh, not their exaltation,—these were the manifest duty of the faithful, and marvelously did many holy saints fulfil it.

Tennyson's "St. Simeon Stylites" embodies much of the idea. But it scarcely does the saint justice. Not only did he feel it to be his duty to expose himself for his sins on the top of his pillar and to otherwise diligently mortify the flesh, but he further showed his sanctity, it is said, by an unusual contempt for worldly affections. His

first promptings towards a life of holiness moved him to flee from home and break the heart of a devoted father. Twenty-seven years later his mother found out where he was and made haste to visit him. But he closed his door on her. She wept and implored for a sight of his face. "My son," she cried, "why hast thou done this? I gave thee life, and thou hast bowed me down with grief. I gave thee milk, and thou hast wrung from me tears. I gave thee kisses, and thou hast given me the anguish of a broken heart. For all my pain and toil for thy sake thou hast repaid me in bitter wrongs." But it was all in vain. The saint sent word that she would see him soon. Three days and nights she remained before her son's closed door, and then, aged and feeble and exhausted with grief, she died. Then, and not till then, did the holy man come forth and offer a prayer for his mother's soul, while his followers and the world extolled so marvelous a victory over worldly desires and affections.<sup>1</sup> No earthly love, no demand of the flesh, no yearning of the intellect, no worldly ambition, no social or civic or filial or paternal duty was as aught beside the duty to save one's soul alive and to propitiate a wrathful God by prayer and penance. Even the monastic duties of work and teaching were not to be emphasized. "The duty of a monk," said St. Jerome, "is not to teach but to weep."

As time passed and as the rule of St. Benedict came in the sixth century to reduce the monastic ideal to something like order, these extremes of asceticism doubtless became less common and less monstrous. But the ascetic conception of virtue remained characteristic of Latin Christianity in no very modified form through century

<sup>1</sup> Lecky, "European Morals," Vol. II., p. 138.

after century. And if monks, priests, bishops and even Popes often fell away from it in practice, yet it remained none the less an ideal, and a very powerful and subtle one. Now it was just this that needed to be changed in some way or other before our modern life could come to its birth. The dark shadow needed to be lifted. The eternal contemplation of sin must no longer be the normal attitude of the man who was to be esteemed good. Human bonds, human affections, human needs must no longer be esteemed vain and evil. "The world and the flesh" must no more be looked upon as the inevitable associates of "the devil." So when Fra Angelico painted sweet human faces for his women and his angels alike, when he gave them bright, dainty robes, when he showed pretty roses topping a wall and bright little flowers in his heavenly meadow, when he even made a joyful little friar clasp his pretty lady-love in a very eager and very human embrace in the very presence of the angels, he was definitely helping to put aside the pall of human depravity, the ever present horror of the devil, the refusal to see brightness and joy even in frail humanity and material nature. From such a point of view it will not seem strange after all, perhaps, to associate Boccaccio with Fra Angelico himself as with Giotto and with St. Francis, in this great work of parting the clouds, of bringing back sunshine to the weary, restless world, of consecrating healthy naturalness, of taking away the oppressive burden of sin, Satan, and the fear of Hell.

To tell just how Boccaccio fulfilled his part in all this is not easy without telling his stories, and this would not be easy to do even were there space without offending the proprieties. But even if one cannot help sometimes being

disgusted with the Decameron, yet one should not carry too much of our twentieth-century delicacy into these studies of fourteenth-century Italy. After all Boccaccio is not much worse than his contemporary, our well-beloved Chaucer. And in any case much of the Decameron may still be read even by the most sensitive without offense. For the coarseness and broad humor of some of the stories, spontaneous and without malice as it is, by no means taints the book throughout. It is not the evil, the penetratingly evil product of a bad man and a blasé society. It is simply the open-hearted, unrestrained, wide-eyed survey of life on its lighter side. Indeed if his spirit still haunts our libraries he must look at us sometimes in a quizzical, puzzled way, wondering how it is that we look so sternly upon his merry tales. For life was gay to him, scholar and friend of Petrarch though he was, and he would doubtless marvel much how any one could refuse to cast aside petty conventions and go with him to the Florence of jest and song, of light heart and quick tongue that he knew so well.

Not all jest was it to him either, for he and Petrarch both saw their city in the grip of the Black Death,<sup>1</sup> and terrible indeed is the picture of it in the introduction to the Decameron. Yet that awful year supplies the framework to the stories. For it was during the plague that a little group of youths and maids met one day at mass in Santa Maria Novella. And here where the Rucellai Madonna gazed sadly down upon them they talked things over, and decided to go from the death-stricken city to the country. They did so and in a rural retreat "on a little hill, somewhat withdrawn on every side from the

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1348. Petrarch's Laura died of this plague in Avignon.

highway and full of various shrubs and plants, all green of leafage and pleasant to behold" they comforted their exile by telling diverting tales. But all the tales would not give us more of the new attitude to life that was in Boccaccio's heart than this one little fragment, selected almost at random. It is uttered by the lady who suggested the flight to the country. "There," she said, "may we hear the small birds sing, there may we see the hills and plains clad all in green and the fields full of corn wave as doth the sea; there may we see trees, a thousand sorts, and there is the face of heaven more open to view, the which, angered against us though it be, nevertheless denieth not unto us its eternal beauties."





LORENZO DE' MEDICI AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN  
Detail from Benozzo Gozzoli's Fresco in the Riccardi Palace, Florence

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FLORENCE OF THE MEDICI

On the old Via Larga, now the Via Cavour, stands the strong, heavy old palace of the Medici, changed somewhat and enlarged by later members of the family, and by the family that gave it its present name, Palazzo Riccardi. If you enter it and climb the stairs you may find one room that recalls very vividly the days of Cosimo and Lorenzo. It is their old family chapel. Once when Lorenzo was still a boy his grandfather, Cosimo, ordered the painter Benozzo Gozzoli, a pupil of Fra Angelico, to adorn its walls with a fresco representing the adoration of the Magi. It was done, and most of the picture still remains.<sup>1</sup> Each of these walls contains the representation of one of the three kings with his retinue, and here on the right wall as you enter your eye lights on the gay figure of one of the magi, not an old man, as you have always thought of these wise men of the East, but a boy. Indeed, this is Lorenzo himself at the age, perhaps, of fifteen, painted by one who knew him well. He who later became so strangely ill favored was quite handsome then, bright of face and gayly dressed, looking gallant enough on his stately white horse. And foremost in the retinue that follows the boy king of the picture is a gray-haired old man who is Cosimo himself, with the shrewd kindly face of a good man of the world who has tasted to the

<sup>1</sup> Part of it, the Madonna and Child, has been taken to Berlin, and there is a window there instead. The chapel was lit wholly by artificial light in Cosimo's time.

full the joys of this earth, and is yet at peace with himself.

The thirteenth century, that in which Dante and Giotto were born and lived the first half of their lives, saw the triumph of the republican Guelfs over the aristocratic Ghibellines in Florence. The victory seemed to mean the victory of the popular party. But after all, it was carried through by families who were in their own way as proud as the nobility, and a republican oligarchy was formed soon that reminds us of that which gradually usurped the government of Rome in the third century before Christ and held it until the days of Cæsar. It governed, on the whole, well, but republican as Florence was, it was no more governed by the people than was republican Rome in the time of the Gracchi. Though the parallel must not be pushed too far, one may perhaps think of the control of New York by Tammany Hall, a control made possible by the fact that the leaders of Tammany Hall are the working leaders of the party which includes the majority of New York voters. Those who see in our midst great cities inhabited by people who loudly proclaim their unalterable republicanism, their inalienable liberty, and which are yet controlled—almost owned—by a ring of professional politicians, should not find it hard to understand how a few Senators governed Rome or how the executive of the Parte Guelfa governed Florence.

But just as the Rome of the Gracchi, of Marius, and of Cæsar found leaders who sought to break the power of the governing class by leading a revival of the people, so did Florence. And in the fourteenth century and early fifteenth the restless people, fretting against the power of the Guelf "machine," came to look with peculiar confi-

dence and loyalty on one family. The Medici, wealthy as they had become, were of the people, and whether they were disinterested or not, they willingly came to be looked upon as faithful champions of the many against the few. They earned the bitter hostility of the old republican families and the enthusiastic love of the people. Bit by bit they grew stronger. Their own political organization became equal to that of their opponents, until at last Cosimo<sup>1</sup> de' Medici was the real ruler of Florence. He only occasionally held office, it is true. His power was rather that of a political "boss," but it was none the less complete, backed as it was by consummate skill in the management of men, by enormous wealth, by business connections all over Europe which rivaled the diplomatic machinery of a state, and by unlimited popularity. It is this man whom you see riding contentedly in the train of his favorite grandson in Benozzo's fresco.

Cosimo's personal merits were scarcely dissociated in the minds of the people from those of his family. The shrewd old man quite realized that if all remained well he could pass on his power to his son and grandson. But his son Piero, though his mind was keen enough and his spirit worthy of the task, had not the physical strength demanded by the double responsibility of maintaining a great business and governing Florence. Cosimo knew this, and endeavored the more carefully to train Piero's son Lorenzo to carry on the family tradition. The boy's

<sup>1</sup> One is often reminded of the wise comment of Aristotle on the danger of an extreme democracy becoming a tyranny: "Generally, it should be remembered that those who have secured power to the state—whether private citizens, or magistrates, or tribes—are apt to cause revolutions. For either envy of their greatness draws others into rebellion, or they themselves, in their pride of superiority, are unwilling to remain on a level with others." And again: "Most of the ancient tyrants were originally leaders of the people." —*POLITICS*, Book V.

keen, supple mind and ambitious spirit responded nobly. He was the very apple of the old man's eye in his declining years.

Cosimo died in the year 1464. Piero struggled against disease for a few years, delegating many duties to his brilliant young son, and holding unbroken the power of his house, and then, when he in turn passed away, in 1469, Lorenzo was definitely asked by the chief men in Florence to take the headship of the city which had been held by his father and grandfather. He consented, and his "reign," as we are tempted to call it, lasted until his death in 1492. In those years he made his little state the equal of powerful monarchies and his own name immortal. Not through conquests or diplomacy, indeed, though his diplomacy kept the peace in Italy for years and held apart the foes whose mad quarrels were to bring ruin and desolation to the land after his death, but through a matchless personality and through the zeal with which he identified himself with the great intellectual and artistic movement of his time.<sup>1</sup>

It is not easy to decide on the phases of Florentine life in the fifteenth century that most need emphasis. But without being at all certain that every one would agree with you, you decide for the painters, and after some meditation you cross the Ponte Vecchio and thread your devious way through narrow streets towards the church of S. Maria della Carmine. Fascinating shops detain

<sup>1</sup> Of the lives of Lorenzo it is sufficient here to name Armstrong's in the *Heroes of the Nations* series. It may be well before going farther to mention with earnest commendation Edmund Gardner's "Florence," a most admirable historical and descriptive account of the city. Symonds' "Renaissance in Italy," especially the volumes on "The Revival of Learning" and "The Fine Arts," is indispensable for a thorough study of the Renaissance, and Burckhardt's "Renaissance" is just as good, though quite different in plan. Berenson's "Florentine Painters" is the best and briefest critical account of the painters.

you now and then—places where cheerful workmen are carving Italian walnut into chairs and tables, or on a smaller scale into bellows and picture frames. Such shops are numerous on this south side of the Arno, and you have wild desires to buy all that they contain. But you only gloat affectionately over the gracefully ramping dragons, the dainty Florentine lilies, the fearsome goblin heads, and pretty conventional tracery, and pass sternly on with a virtuous consciousness of severe self-denial. And in due time you reach your church and make your way to the Brancacci chapel, in the right transept. Here, you have been told, you will find paintings that are worth while, the masterpieces of Masaccio.

The last great name in painting in the fourteenth century was that of Fra Angelico. The fifteenth claims him, too, for he did not die until 1455, but in the latter part of his life he is not so distinctly alone and supreme in his greatness. For in 1401 was born this Masaccio, and before the first quarter of the century was over there had been things painted that in a sense began another period of Florentine and Italian art. So you make a brief survey of the frescoes of the chapel, and finally select for examination an undoubted work by Masaccio, a representation of the incident of Christ and the tribute money. You soon find the essential figures and catch the drift of the picture, so to speak, and then you begin to see why it is at the same time both famous and little known, if such a paradox may be permitted. To every student of Italian art the name of Masaccio is not simply familiar, but one of the greatest—to be ranked with Giotto and Botticelli and Michelangelo. Yet for every hundred reasonably well-informed people who know the name of, say, Fra

Angelico, there is perhaps one who knows anything whatever about Masaccio. And the reason is not very difficult to find. As you look at this picture of the "Tribute Money,"<sup>1</sup> you find no enthusiasm stirring within you. The evident dynamic element in Giotto, the eager effort to attain more than brush or hand could master, the reaching out for beauty and reality, had fascinated you in spite of the crude drawing and perspective. The lovely faces, the delicate color, the ineffable daintiness, the innocent, simple devotion and other-worldliness of Fra Angelico had charmed you unceasingly in spite of his remoteness from material reality. But here is better drawing, better perspective than either Giotto or Fra Angelico could master, more grace than Giotto had, more force and sense of actuality than Fra Angelico, and yet less of the eager life which so attracted you in the one, and of the exquisite, flower-like loveliness which delights all who look at the pictures of the other. Still, the longer you look at these strong figures in Masaccio's painting the more do you feel that after all no painter up to his time would have been capable of creating them. They have nearly the life, the vigor of Giotto, and they have a grace, an ease, a sense of being perfectly ordinary everyday men that Giotto's had not and could not have. And in color, if there is not the delicacy, the brightness of Fra Angelico there is an element just as much to be valued—the sense of shadow, of a certain hazy somberness that is restful and that grows on you with longer study. There is a flavor of autumn about the scene. Leafless trees stand in a shadowy background with something of the

<sup>1</sup> Many of the pictures once attributed to Masaccio have been ruthlessly taken from him by the critics. Very few are left, indeed, but this is one of them.

mystery, the quiet, the invitation of a November forest, when the leaves and most of the birds are gone. No bright colors dazzle or charm you, and if your eye is not caught so quickly as by some other paintings it is perhaps the more content to linger.

Now cross the Arno again and walk past the Duomo and Campanile, past the Riccardi Palace, to the unpretending building known as the Academy of Fine Arts (*Accademia di Belle Arti*). You pass by the gigantic "David" of Michelangelo, turn to your left into the room called "The Room of Perugino," and take your stand before the great "Coronation" of Fra Filippo Lippi. It was not fair perhaps to come straight from Masaccio to Fra Filippo. You should at least have paused before Ghiberti's marvelous bronze gates to note how sculpture still led her sister art, how such a relief as that representing the meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba had a sense of form, and even of perspective, a feeling for composition and for wonderful picturesqueness that painting had still to learn. But just at present you are putting sculpture to one side and trying to see the development of painting. You have caught in Masaccio a glimmering of a new realism, a carrying on of Giotto's great message beyond even Giotto's dream, and you are eager to see how the next great painter attacks the problem. Here, then, is a good, typical piece of Fra Filippo's work. Here is the Virgin, and here are angels and saints, the whole celestial company, gathered to witness the glory of the Madonna. Are they angels, or are they human? You breathe a sigh of relief and pleasure. Each face gives you a personal sense of satisfaction. You could welcome them all as personal friends, so pleasant and good-natured

are they. Heaven must assuredly be a delightsome and satisfying place, less devoutly spiritual doubtless than the Paradise of Fra Angelico, but easier for a mortal to contemplate, less remote, more possible, perhaps more friendly, more unaffectedly inviting. Not an angel of them all but looks capable of brightening up at a chance suggestion of Chianti, and the Virgin herself can never have known a serious care. A bright, happy assembly of joyous beings who would willingly, you are sure, do anything they could to make the world happier. Indeed, you insensibly grow happier yourself as you look, and you wish you could say so to the good friar himself. You can only cast benevolent glances at the kindly face of "Brother Lippo" as he kneels there on your right with the inscription before him, "*Is perfecit opus*" (This is he who did it). For if you would not willingly abate one jot of Fra Angelico's spirituality, yet you would be equally reluctant to take anything from Fra Filippo's new note of kindly human feeling. Nothing coarse or material is here, nothing really fleshly or sensual. Only the note of asceticism is gone. Fra Filippo's angels and saints are living, breathing, life-enjoying human creatures, good and pure, surely, with not a taint of the sensual or grossly material about them, yet no longer intent solely on the contemplation of holiness. Browning has put the plan of it into the friar's mouth:

"I shall paint  
God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,  
Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood,  
Lilies and vestments and white faces, sweet  
As puff on puff of grated orris-root  
When ladies crowd to church at midsummer;  
And there i' the front, of course, a saint or two."

And so on, until the painter himself appears in the heavenly company by mistake:

"I, caught up with my monk's things by mistake,  
 My old serge gown and rope that goes all round,  
 I, in this presence, this pure company!  
 Where's a hole, where's a corner for escape?  
 Then steps a sweet angelic slip of thing  
 Forward, puts out a soft palm—'not so fast!'  
 Addresses the celestial presence, 'nay—  
 He made you and devised you, after all,  
 Though he's none of you! Could St. John there draw—  
 His camel-hair make up a painting brush?  
 We come to Brother Lippo for all that.  
*Iste perfecit opus!*"

And even more worth while is it to see and digest Browning's summing up, in Fra Lippo's eager words to the watchman who has apprehended him,<sup>1</sup> of the attitude to life implied in all of these fifteenth-century paintings.

" You've seen the world,  
 The beauty and the wonder and the power,  
 The shapes of things, their colors, lights, and shades,  
 Changes, surprises—and God made it all!  
 For what? Do you feel thankful, aye or no,  
 For this fair town's face, yonder river's line,  
 The mountain round it and the sky above,  
 Much more the figures of man, woman, child,  
 These are the frame to? What's it all about?  
 To be passed over, despised? Or dwelt upon,  
 Wondered at? O this last, of course!—you say.  
 But why not do as well as say,—paint these  
 Just as they are, careless what comes of it?

<sup>1</sup> Every one should be familiar with this poem, "Fra Lippo Lippi," and with "Andrea del Sarto." Browning has, perhaps, overemphasized the fleshly element in Fra Lippo's character and work, and it is possible that all might not agree with his estimate of Andrea; but in the main the idea in each poem is deeply true.

God's works—paint any one, and count it crime  
To let a truth slip. Don't object, 'His works  
Are here already; nature is complete:  
Suppose you reproduce her—(which you can't)  
There's no advantage! You must beat her, then,'  
For, don't you mark? We're made so that we love  
First when we see them painted, things we have passed  
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;  
And so they are better, painted—better to us,  
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that;  
God uses us to help each other so,  
Lending our minds out. Have you noticed, now,  
Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of chalk,  
And trust me but you should, though! How much more  
If I drew higher things with the same truth!  
That were to take the prior's pulpit place,  
Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,  
It makes me mad to see what men shall do  
And we in our graves! This world's no blot for us  
Nor blank; it means intensely, and means good."

To speak briefly, then, Fra Filippo's message is contained in these last two lines. His paintings preach the goodness, the joy, and the beauty of this world. His realism is not the realism which finds it necessary to portray ugliness, and which regards foulness as an evidence of truth. He simply saw in the faces and characters about him so much that attracted him, so much clearer an interpretation of the Divine than anything else he could imagine, that to him realism and idealism became identical.

One could spend a long time with Fra Filippo and the son who carried on his traditions, Filippino Lippi, painter of the "Vision of St. Bernard" and the lovely "Madonna of the Rose Garden" in the Uffizi, but for the present you must turn to a pupil of Brother Lippo's who became even greater than his master, Sandro Botticelli. In another

room of the academy is a famous painting which will do very well as a type of Botticelli's power and of his advance over his predecessors in breadth of artistic vision. It is the "*Primavera*" (the Allegory of Spring). It is not easy to work out every detail of the allegory, and for our purposes it is perhaps not necessary. You are looking into a cool, green grove, where in a little open space a group of nymphs and goddesses are standing or strolling on a carpet of grass and pretty spring flowers. Above their heads flies a chubby little Cupid, who aims an arrow straight at the heart of one of the maids who represent, you suppose, the Graces. She is looking pensively at a youth to the left, Giuliano de' Medici, Lorenzo's brother, who stands here for Hermes. Here from the right comes Flora, covered with pretty leaves and with purple and dull red flowers, and beside her a Zephyr speeds in pursuit of a nymph from whose mouth flowers are dropping. Venus herself stands in the midst rather sadly surveying it all, as if the exuberance of spring-time palled somewhat and meant little to her immortal youth. The loose robe of Venus and that of Giuliano are practically the only reds in the picture. The rest is white or yellow or cool, dark green, dotted with the little flowers. The whole tone of the picture is soft and cool, rather than gay and bright, and though there is a subtle sense of grace and movement all through it—a movement which gives you a strange consciousness of breezes and rustling and wavy swaying—yet it is subdued and quiet throughout. It seems just a little strange, this touch of melancholy, in a painting of spring, and you find the same pensiveness in the "*Birth of Venus*" in the Uffizi, where Botticelli shows the new-born goddess standing in her open sea-shell, and being

wafted to shore over tiny waves. Both paintings are a response to the passion of interest in Greece and Rome that was characteristic of fifteenth-century Florence. Both show a drifting away from the purely religious atmosphere, from the close association with the Church, which had been the dominant fact in the development of painting till the time of Fra Filippo Lippi. Even Fra Filippo had used only sacred subjects, though he treated them in a secular, human way. But Botticelli definitely takes pagan subjects and tries to deal with them in the ancient way.

How far he succeeded is perhaps a question. To place one of the Casa Vettii frescoes in Pompeii beside this "Birth of Venus" would be, you imagine, to compare things utterly unlike, the first century with the fifteenth. It is a far cry from the Venus of Melos to the Venus of the "Primavera," from the Hermes of Praxiteles to the Hermes of Botticelli. The humanism of Lorenzo and his circle might do away with medieval asceticism and medieval narrowness in theology, but a certain nameless wistfulness, a feeling for the infinite possibilities of the soul, a yearning for the unattainable, an unescapable sense of

"The heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world,"

would inevitably remain as the heritage of centuries of Christian teaching to make impossible the exultant sense of perfection, the calm, self-satisfied serenity of the ancient Greeks. Botticelli is still, then, a Christian painter,—less naïve, less simple in his faith than Filippino Lippi or the fourteenth-century painters,—more inclined to ponder over things and be puzzled by life's contradictions, but still Christian far more than pagan. The revival of

paganism by the humanist scholars had as yet only disturbed and distressed the faithful, or had at most only modified their ideas of life and widened their horizon of thought, without at all uprooting and sweeping away the old standards of faith or the essential hold of Christianity on earnest minds.

Masaccio, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli—these three are perhaps the typical fifteenth-century masters of Florentine art. There are others, indeed, men like Benozzo Gozzoli and Filippino Lippi and Ghirlandajo and Andrea del Sarto, who painted glorious pictures and greatly exalted the fame of their city and their age. But in greater or less measure they shared the characteristics of the masters you have been studying. All of them show the increasing sense for human feeling and for the joys of this present life. Yet all have the lingering feeling that beauty of the flesh and worldly joy are less to be valued than holiness and beauty of spirit. The most devout is doubtless Filippino; the least so is perhaps Ghirlandajo. Still Ghirlandajo's pictures vary greatly in this regard, and one might in some respects name Andrea rather as the least religious of the Florentines. Attractive as his paintings must always be to lovers of beauty, exquisite as are both faces and figures in, for instance, the "Madonna of the Harpies," yet his delight was largely, one might say, in the externals of painting. He was a master colorist, and had almost a Venetian love for rich harmonies and gorgeous detail. But even Andrea and Ghirlandajo are seldom without the spirit of reverence that one grows to associate in a peculiar degree with the name of Florence. The Florentines have been called the Puritans of Italy, and the parallel is not without suggestiveness. They passed on their tradi-

tion even beyond the fifteenth century. Verocchio, the painter of the lovely twilight "Annunciation" of the Uffizi, was the teacher of Leonardo. Michelangelo was a student under Lorenzo's protection. So that in a sense the "Last Supper" and the terrible "Last Judgment" are the final expression in painting of the stern persistence of Florence in her old faith until her liberty and clearness of vision together departed from her.

Still, even while remembering, nay emphasizing this Florentine Puritanism, this characteristic vein of seriousness and devotion that so marks off the Florentine from the Venetian painters, one should not forget the contribution of the humanists and of Fra Filippo. Few of the best souls in Florence, it is true, ever lost hold entirely of the old faith. They retained throughout the grave spirituality which in different degrees and in different ways marks Dante, Giotto, Masaccio, and Michelangelo. But the fifteenth century saw, nevertheless, the steady advance of a conscious joy in the life of this world. The peculiar mixture of Christian with pagan ideas and ideals which characterized the Renaissance at its height is amusing and almost unintelligible to a modern. But even Dante had Charon and Cerberus in his Christian Hell, and the easy assimilation of heathen with Christian mythology that one sees in our own poetry as late as Milton is a sufficient hint of the way in which noble minds could retain, theoretically, their allegiance to medieval faith and ideals, and yet adopt with enthusiasm and without shock the study of antiquity, the new delight in pure culture, and the new joy in earthly existence. Medicean Florence did not, as a matter of fact, analyze or understand itself. The emaciated, spiritual faces of Filippino Lippi are just as characteristic in

their own way of his city and time as the pleasant visages of Fra Lippo's saints and angels. Pico della Mirandola, beloved by saints and men of the world, Platonist and Christian, prince among scholars and purest of souls, friend of Lorenzo and of Savonarola, was perhaps the one supreme instance of the combination of the new humanism with the old faith, each in its noblest form. But the two streams did not always coalesce. And in painting, the "Priniavera" of Botticelli is the most ideal expression of Florentine spirituality and religious feeling, gazing reflectively and yet withal eagerly at the new brightness of the once despised world. Few could have Pico's confident grasp of the ultimate oneness of all truth, his fearless reaching out to Plato with one hand and to Christ with the other. To the average thoughtful Florentine the matter was rather as Botticelli had it—the world undoubtedly good, beauty and nature and romance undoubtedly worth while, but back of all a seriousness, an uneasy questioning that was never long absent or very far from the surface.

So as Fra Angelico's "Paradise" was an interpretation in its way of the ideals of the later fourteenth century, so the "Primavera" is to be turned to again and again as a true voice from the Florence of Lorenzo. It is not simply an allegory, else, perhaps, it might not deserve to be called a great picture. It is a portrayal of living and most fascinating figures on a background of which you will never tire. It is no desecration to let Keats interpret these goddesses, this music of graceful line and soft color, this nymph fleeing from embrace, as if his glance had fallen on this rather than on that other shape of far different beauty.

"What men or gods are these? What maidens loath  
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!"

One might well wish for a really intimate glimpse of the age that knew Botticelli and Ghirlandajo, Verocchio and Poliziano, Pico della Mirandola and Lorenzo himself in their prime. And another there was, the supreme type of Florentine Puritanism, the great Dominican who vainly tried to stem the corruption and paganism that was destroying the old ideals of life and faith, the mighty Savonarola. It is half pathetic to see the broad-minded, cultured Lorenzo reaching out to Savonarola the hand that the reformer sternly refused to take. Lorenzo, steeped in Plato, learned in the languages, the literature, and the thought of Greece and Rome, keenest of art critics, past master in diplomacy and statesmanship, who could turn from philosophy or politics to write jewel lyrics, songs that flashed through all Tuscany and were sung in the streets of the city—this supreme man of the world could rightly enough value Savonarola. He was a judge of men, and he knew that the friar was a leader of men. But the great reformer, narrow as he was zealous, looked bitterly upon Lorenzo as a very incarnation of the

worldly spirit against which he had declared war. The love of earthly beauty, the delight in philosophy and poetry, all the great enthusiasms and achievements which were to make the age of Lorenzo an age never to be forgotten, were as nothing to this prophet who cried his somber warning of wrath to come in spite of poet or painter, philosopher or ruler. After Lorenzo died the words of Savonarola began to tell, and for a time he was supreme, as the representative and voice of Jesus Christ, sole ruler of Florence. But he could not hold back the tide alone. He had declared war on the Renaissance in all its glory,—the Renaissance of Greek license and paganism as of Greek ideals of beauty and of thought, the idealization of the foul and the earthly as well as of the divine in humanity and in God's world—and with its sad evils and its mighty good the genius of the time was too strong for him. His brief power vanished. The wrath of the wicked whom he had tried to crush conquered and slew him. He had refused to identify himself with what was good in the Renaissance, and trying to stand alone, he perished. There is little basis for a parallel between Savonarola and Socrates. And yet this much is true, that each stood valiantly for righteousness, each won for a time respect, and even reverence, each refused to compromise with evil, and each was put to death by his city. And this also, the warning of each, unheeded, was remembered when destruction fell, and when bitter repentance came too late to Florence as to Athens.

But what of the side of Lorenzo's Florence that Poliziano and Pico della Mirandola stood for? There has surely been a notable lack in your thinking about the Renaissance so far when you have neglected the revival

of learning. It seems to you when you come to think of it, that long ago in your school-days you were taught that "Renaissance" and "Revival of Learning" were almost interchangeable terms, and yet here you have been discussing the Renaissance in many pages with barely a mention of this wave of new enthusiasm for things Greek and Roman. Well, in so far as this implies neglect, you have erred indeed. The revival of antique culture meant as much to the world, doubtless, as did the art of Giotto and Botticelli and Leonardo, and if you had been planning a systematic treatise you would have said so before this.

To see the real beginning of this conscious revival of the spirit, the thought, the literature of antiquity, you must go back to Petrarch,<sup>1</sup> the first lyric poet of Italy, and the father of humanism. We do not easily understand now this latter phrase, father of humanism, but it means a great deal. It means just that Petrarch was the leader in the bringing back of classical culture to the knowledge and interest of men. It must be remembered that culture, the breadth of mind and the exactness, the elasticity, the comprehensiveness of thought that only comes from much reading of good literature and the patient digestion thereof, could only then be had through the Greeks and Romans. We of these later days do not absolutely need any language but our own. We may read for a lifetime and read great things and still not exhaust what is worth while in our own language. But it was not so in Italy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Until Dante wrote

<sup>1</sup> See Robinson's "Petrarch," easily the best book in English on the poet-scholar. Petrarch's father was a friend of Dante, and they were banished from Florence in the same year, 1302. Francis Petrarca—or Petracco, if you wish to use his father's exact name—was born two years later, in exile, at Arezzo. He always counted himself a Florentine, though he lived little in Florence.

there was no vernacular literature whatever. Until Boccaccio wrote there was no such thing as good Italian prose. There was nothing that could possibly take the place of Homer and the Attic dramatists, of Cicero, Virgil, and Horace. Yet these had drifted out of the ken of Europe many generations before. Greek had vanished utterly, and if Latin remained, the appreciation of the spirit of Cicero and Virgil was quite gone. The few who read the Roman poets were constantly suspecting allegories and symbolism, or gravely accepting the narrative of the adventures of *Aeneas* as a chronicle of historic facts. The old free, broad gaze at the world, the pleasure in bright fancy and in the music of rich verse, the desire to enjoy this life for its own sake, the immense interest in human nature, in its complexity, its power, its unfathomed possibilities,—all of these which were second nature to the cultured Roman of the first or second century of our era, were foreign and unknown to the Christian thinker of the thirteenth. The medieval mind busied itself rather with logic and rhetoric, and wove for itself great networks of metaphysics and theology. So that it is because Petrarch definitely and powerfully stood out against all this that he is called the father of humanism. He did not condemn the favorite medieval mental exercise of logic. “Far from it . . . I know that it is one of the liberal studies, a ladder for those who are striving upwards, and by no means a useless protection to those who are forcing their way through the thorny thickets of philosophy. . . . But because a road is proper for us to traverse, it does not immediately follow that we should linger on it forever. No traveler, unless he be mad, will forget his destination on account of the pleasures of the

way; his characteristic virtue lies, on the contrary, in reaching his goal as soon as possible. . . . Dialectics may form a portion of our road, but certainly not its end; it belongs to the morning of life, not to its evening." You may equally see Petrarch's capacity for putting aside cobwebs and getting at the heart of things in such a comment as this on the philosopher who dominated—almost enslaved—the minds of later medieval thinkers: "I believe that Aristotle was a great man and that he knew much; yet he was but a man, and therefore something, nay many things, may have escaped him. . . . And although he has said much of happiness both at the beginning and the end of his 'Ethics,' I dare assert that he was so completely ignorant of true happiness that the opinions upon this matter of any pious old woman, or devout fisherman, shepherd, or farmer, would, if not so fine spun, be more to the point than his." Join, then, this new critical power, this clear-eyed grip on essentials, to an unaffected pleasure in literary beauty, a joy in poetry for its own sake, and one may a little understand how great a gift of freshness, of naturalness, of directness Petrarch gave to his time. And he accompanied this revival of the old Greek and Roman point of view regarding culture by earnest, lifelong efforts to rescue from hidden corners the neglected, dust-covered manuscripts of the old civilizations. So he not only brought to view the old masterpieces again, but he taught people how to read them.

This work of Petrarch's was nobly followed up by his friends and disciples. He himself had never been able to find a teacher of Greek. He only knew Homer in a bad Latin translation. But soon the tongue of Sophocles and Plato began to be studied and rapidly mastered, as scholars

from Constantinople found it worth their while to come to Venice and Florence. The coming of Manuel Chrysoloras, a Byzantine Greek and one of the foremost Hellenists of his age, to fill the chair of Greek in the University of Florence in 1396 was the beginning of a new era, and the patronage of men like Palla degli Strozzi, Cosimo de' Medici, and Pope Nicholas V., secured the future of Greek scholarship. Libraries were founded and steadily added to. Eager students came from all parts of Europe to study under Chrysoloras and his successors. And by the time of Lorenzo's young manhood the Greek literature, the Greek attitude to life, were as familiar to Italian scholars as they are to the scholars of to-day. Plato and Homer were living realities to them. To Poliziano and to Pico, the two greatest scholars of their time, Greek was as familiar as Latin had been to Petrarch, and it seems natural, too, that with the little group of brilliant companions that constituted the nucleus of Lorenzo's court, Plato should be the prime favorite. To them Aristotle's teacher, with his great vein of poetry, his vivid imagination, his love of roaming at large through all the world of human thought and action, was greater than Aristotle himself with his systematic treatises, his more formal and final doctrines. The Platonic academy in which Lorenzo and Poliziano and the noble and well-loved lord of Mirandola studied and dreamed and crossed swords in keen dialectic represented, doubtless, the highest point of the intellectual Renaissance.

But whether one looks at the painting, the poetry, the scholarship, the sculpture, the architecture, or the philosophy of that wonderful age, it is after all the same spirit

in all that fascinates and will ever fascinate while the world stands. It was one of the ages in which the race seems to renew its youth. Even the supreme art of the generation that followed, the art of the sixteenth-century masters, cannot quite thrill with the glow or delight with the charm that Filippo Lippi and Botticelli give us. Supreme mastery of technique and majesty of vision may compel our worship, and yet one may still turn from them to this age of enthusiasm, this age of immortal youth. The early sixteenth-century scholars surpassed Poliziano and Pico in textual criticism and in defined purism of style; they never approached the friends of Lorenzo in real genius and power, and as to their chief, the central figure of this golden age of Florence,—well, you are content to view him as neither a philanthropist nor the tyrannical destroyer of his city's liberties. You are inclined to condemn Lorenzo little more than you condemn Cæsar. It seems an ungracious thing, somehow, to pass harsh sentence against a man of his type, so lovable, so open-minded, and so great. So you put aside accusing voices, even the stern thunder-note of Savonarola, and salute the Florentine banker-prince and poet-scholar across the centuries with something of affection. Even Italy produced few men like him. In a cool, very quiet little chapel in the heart of Florence, not five minutes' walk from the old palace of the Medici, all that is mortal of him still lies in its stone coffin, brooded over by a beautiful, unfinished Madonna by Michelangelo, “After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.” Others of his name came after him, and in time they made themselves Grand Dukes of Tuscany, but the full bloom, the exuberance, the freedom, and half-unconscious power of the Renaissance was over. There

never really was found a successor to the keen mind, the broad scholarship, the clear-sighted statesmanship, the catholic taste, the kindly care for artists and poets, the joyous contact with the whole spiritual blossoming of his marvelous time, of Lorenzo the Magnificent.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RENAISSANCE ROME

Not long ago you walked about the Forum and the Palatine and meditated on the splendors of ancient Rome. You stand now in the Piazza of St. Peter's with the message of Renaissance Rome everywhere about you. And you are conscious of a long gap between the two. You have had glimpses into the Middle Ages as you studied Assisi, Genoa, or Florence, but what of Rome all this time! Indeed, there seem to be many centuries unaccounted for as far as all Italy is concerned. It cannot be helped here, perhaps, but truth to tell, you are inclined to suspect that to a woefully large majority Europe—except for the barbarian invasions, the Crusades, and the towering figure of Charlemagne—is practically non-existent from the days of Julius Cæsar to the thirteenth century. And this is especially true of Italy. University students to whom Pericles and Cicero are familiar friends, are content to leap in their survey of the past from the reign of Augustus—not to the Renaissance, but to the later Middle Ages—from the end of the Roman republic to the age of Innocent III. Students of literature pass in their reading and thinking from Virgil and Horace, or at latest Tacitus and Juvenal and Pliny, to Dante and Petrarch. And only those who are specifically interested in the history of the Christian Church know anything real or vital about those ages during which the civilization of Rome was subtly passing on its heritage to the Teuton

settlers and conquerors, the ages that saw the passing of the classical ideals and their displacement by the half-Christian and half-pagan civilization that one sees fully formed in the thirteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Every one knows the names, if that were all, of Marcus Aurelius, of St. Augustine, of St. Benedict, of Gregory the Great, of the venerable Bede. But of the ideals and troubles and temptations and ways of thinking that made up the spiritual life of these men, of the enormous influence and character of the early and medieval Church, of the incidents and conflicts and human needs connected with the rise of the papal power up to the time of Innocent III., few but specialists care.

Yet this is by no means good. It is true that in those centuries there was much confusion and darkness, but out of this chaos great things came; in its midst toiled a chosen remnant of strong men; and it is never quite possible to understand the fruit of the achievements of these men, the thought and deeds of the thirteenth century giants—Innocent III., Francis, Dominic, Thomas Aquinas, Dante—without a sympathetic appreciation of the ages that went before. You are half inclined to think that the very use of the term “Middle Ages” is a pity. Even the idea with which you were inclined in Assisi to be satisfied, that the Middle Ages were peculiarly a time of education, is only suggestive, not entirely adequate. Your soul rebels a little at the conclusion that those centuries had no value in themselves, that they really need an apology, or that they can only be

<sup>1</sup> This defect may be in a measure rectified by Taylor's “Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages,” Lecky's “History of European Morals,” avoiding, perhaps, the philosophical first chapter, and Gibbon's “Decline and Fall.” Bayley's edition of Gibbon has brought that marvelous and ever-new work up to date in point of scholarship.

deemed fruitful in the light of the Renaissance. Boethius, Boniface, Alfred the Great, and Abelard were as great in their way as the poets and painters of the fifteenth century.

Every century, surely, from Augustine to Charlemagne and on to Dante and on still to Lorenzo and Michelangelo, has its own greatness and its own problems, its own place in the slow, steady stream of European development. The fact that for some centuries there was lost the sense of literary style, of artistic beauty and reality, of serene breadth and depth of philosophic vision, makes us call those centuries the Dark Ages, and ignore them or call them transitional. We forget that an age may produce no classic literature, no great art, and no supreme master of philosophy, and yet may contain great thinkers, soldiers, and statesmen. Their problems were not those of fifth-century Athens or Renaissance Florence. They did not demand for their solution a Pericles, a Sophocles, a Lorenzo, or a Botticelli. Rather did the age demand iron wills, ideals true at bottom rather than refined and painfully thought out, purposes sincere and stern, religion childlike, crude, and material in its reality, direct and unquestioning rather than balanced and analytic. It is natural, perhaps, that we should judge an age by its literary or artistic fruit. Yet such a standard is painfully inadequate. Certainly no Virgil or Dante was produced in the eighth century or the eleventh. The philosophy of the "Dark Ages" was barren—the theology fanciful and metaphysical. Yet when we speak of the intellectual stagnation and superstition of the time we ignore the statesmen and soldiers who laid the basis of the new Europe, the lawyers who revived the heritage of Roman

jurisprudence, the popes who made possible the Rome of Hildebrand, of Innocent III., and of Julius II.

Even to think about these things—to realize that the gap in our knowledge between the beginning of the Roman Empire and the fully formed systems and ideas of the thirteenth century, is a gap in our minds rather than in the nature of things—is worth while. You cannot fill the gap, but it is something to see it. In some shadowy way you see those ages no longer as a time only of misery, darkness, and stagnation. Each century you see thronged with stern knights, wise statesmen, earnest saints, great kings, and mighty pontiffs. And never for a moment does Italy give up the sceptre. Her temporal power passes from her indeed—only to prove that the race which produced Rome could still rule the world in spirit and intellect after her legions had been conquered. The successors of Cæsar and Constantine were the Bishops of Rome. And through the long period of torture, when Italy lay mangled and torn apart by aliens and by her own sons, her mighty genius continued to produce scholars, saints, and leaders of men in the calm, inexhaustible fruitfulness of a race that refused to die. The salvation and union of Italy was not yet to be. But Rome was still the Eternal City, and Italy still, in some measure, led the world.

And now, meditating deeply even if confusedly, about the past of the Church, and the amazing history of these spiritual rulers who date their beginning from the impetuous Galilean fisherman, you enter St. Peter's and look about you. Just to your right is a chapel containing a lovely "Pieta," the Madonna holding in tearless sorrow the dead body of her Son, carved over four hundred years

ago by Michelangelo.<sup>1</sup> It is not what you would have expected from the "terrible" master, this lovely, pitiful figure, so quiet and resigned in supremest grief. You know it is not like his other work, and you lean now against a pillar and let your thoughts drift back over the centuries to the time when the earnest young Florentine in Rome saw these forms of beauty in a block of marble and wrought them into shape.

It was Lorenzo who saw the promise of great things in the boy, and gave him an opportunity to learn his art from the best masters and the best models in Italy. In the schools of Florence, the gardens of San Marco, and the palace of Lorenzo, Michelangelo spent the happiest years of his life, in contact with the best minds of his time. The sterner, serious side of his nature, which could never have been far from the surface, was awakened and deepened by the preaching of Savonarola. But the mighty friar was unable to wean him from the patron who had made the artistic life possible to him, and he remained true to Lorenzo until his great patron's death, in 1492. Times began to change then. There was always work to be done, and there were still things to be learned, but Florence was no longer the ideal home for the artist that it had been. So Michelangelo, after some restless journeys, drifted to Rome, and it was there after he had worked for a time quite exclusively on antique subjects, that he was recalled from pagan to Christian ideals of beauty and strength by the news of Savonarola's death. The tragic end of the great reformer moved deeply the

<sup>1</sup> The standard lives of Michelangelo are those of Grimm and Symonds. Much interesting and fruitful comment on his work will be found in Freeman's "Italian Sculpture of the Renaissance," and in Berenson's "Florentine Painters," and two admirable numbers of the *Masters in Art* magazine are devoted to him as sculptor and painter.

soul of the young artist who had once listened so earnestly to the Dominican's solemn warnings of the wrath to come. And the artistic expression of this return of softness, of pitiful sympathy, of sorrow for the death of Christ and the woes of humanity, was the "Pieta."

You are astonished to find how little else there is in St. Peter's that especially appeals to you. No one of English race can look quite unmoved, indeed, at the monument to the exiled princes of the House of Stuart, with Canova's beautiful figures at its base; the inscription to James III. has an odd look, but there is enough charm of romance attached to the memories of that ill-starred family to make even an ardent believer in the Revolution unwilling to protest against the empty title. Strange surely, to have memories of Bonnie Prince Charlie brought to one in St. Peter's! Then in the sacristy, to come back to things Italian, there are a few interesting small pictures by Giotto, with the same general characteristics that you have noted in his work at Assisi and Florence. And with them are the lovely angels of Melozzo da Forli. But in the church itself you find chiefly vast space, second-rate carving, and great pictures or mosaics that you turn away from with indifference. Altogether you are an oddity, incomprehensible and unprofitable to the voluble guides who expatiate about the splendors of the church to the Cook tourists. And you are content to remain so. You stroll meditatively about, ponder over the decent sense of propriety that clothed in metal drapery the nude statues in the choir, gaze with much grave reflection at the old bronze statue of St. Peter with its shining stump of a toe worn away with ages of kissing, shiver a little at the coldness and hugeness of the

great stone structure, and finally decide to mount to the Sistine Chapel. As you turn away from the strange old statue of the Apostle, an earnest-faced mother with a pathetic devotion in her eyes lifts her wee boy to kiss the bright spot on the bronze foot. The act is a prayer after all, and you have a feeling that the God of St. Peter will hear it and answer.

Now for the Sistine. You find the right door, pass the gaily colored Swiss guard, climb the long stairs, and in a moment find yourself inside the doors of the famous room. Right before you, covering with one huge frescoed design the whole end wall of the hall, is Michelangelo's "Last Judgment." Above you, stretching from end to end of the ceiling, are the scenes from Genesis, the Prophets, and the Sibyls. The frescoes that run along each long wall you neglect for the moment, interesting as they are. It is not often, truly, that you would turn away from Botticelli and Pinturicchio, but here Michelangelo dominates all, and you try to enter into the spirit that seems, in the Sistine at least, to be supreme. Flat on the floor you stretch yourself, scorning the conventions, with your head on a couple of books, and gaze upward at the figures that seem to move and strain and radiate strength and energy on the ceiling.

You soon find that the groups representing the various acts of Creation attract you more than those at the other end representing the scenes in the Garden and the incidents of the Deluge. The expulsion of the guilty pair from Eden is impressive, surely, but you cannot help remembering Masaccio's rendering of the same subject in the church of the Carmine in Florence, and Jacopo della Quercia's in the great fountain at Siena, and you are not



THE CREATION OF MAN  
Fresco by Michelangelo, Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Rome



sure that Michelangelo has added anything to your conception of the dignity and grief of Adam and Eve, the horror and completeness of their fall. But the Creation of the Sun and Moon, the Creation of Adam—these provoke no comparison whatever. The tremendous life-giving form of the Creator—the listless, perfectly molded figure of the first man as the finger of the Almighty touches him and awakens him to the first drawing of breath and the first wondering look at the world—these Michelangelo makes real to you, fills with incomparable vitality. And the Prophets and Sibyls, too, Jewish and Gentile foretellers of the Christ—every one of them worth studying, and some, like the Jeremiah and Zachariah, quite unforgettable. As your eye rests on these colossal figures, and drifts from them to the nude forms in every posture that flank the main groups, you increasingly realize the truth of the saying, that in his grip of the significance of the human form and his power of rendering that significance in every phase, Michelangelo is quite supreme. His power seems to show itself in the form rather than in the face, and, as all the world knows, in strength, strain, and stress rather than in repose, meditation, and tenderness. But exceptions to such a statement occur to you at once; it is only true as a very general comment. And as you scan form after form you are more and more lost in astonishment at the restlessness and many-sided power of that swift hand that turned from the portrayal of the brooding Jeremiah, thinking deeply, with head resting on his hand, to the Creator of the Sun and Moon, radiating swift movement and vibrant with force—then to the superb long curves of a resting youth, then to the hawk-eyed, eager old Ezekiel, then to another nude youth,

straining with supple muscles, his black eyes darting restless impatience, and his long raven hair blowing out straight in the wind.

And all this was done by the hand that carved the "Pieta"! Simply to believe that a sculptor painted such a figure as that of Adam is not so impossible. But the repose of the "Pieta," its quietness and soft beauty, seems singularly remote from the restlessness, the force, of the figures—divine and human—on the ceiling here. An interval of about ten years<sup>1</sup> separates the two works. With Michelangelo, as with few other Italian artists, the personal equation is a very potent one, and a glance at the ten years clears up all of the mystery except the unfathomable mystery of genius. After producing the "Pieta" he had drifted back to Florence. There he carved for the republic the colossal "David," Florence facing her foes, and then while he was preparing to do yet greater things for his city, he received his momentous summons to Rome at the end of 1504. The warlike Giuliano della Rovere had become Pope Julius II. The "Pieta" and the "David" had made Michelangelo the most famous sculptor in Italy, and now he was given a commission by the new pope to make a mausoleum more splendid than any in the world. Michelangelo accepted the task with enthusiasm, and submitted a plan magnificent enough even for the ambitious pontiff. The Church of St. Peter, vast and old and crowded with sacred traditions, was not large enough for the great tomb, so a new St. Peter's—the present one—was begun to contain it. Months were now spent in the quarries of Carrara.

<sup>1</sup> Michelangelo was born in 1475. The Pieta was finished probably some time in 1499. The Sistine ceiling was commenced in the spring of 1509.

All the marble needed for the tomb was hewn out under the sculptor's own eye, and the toil and anxiety of the whole tedious process of getting it safely from northern Tuscany to Rome was repaid only by the greatness of the reward to come, in congenial labor and in sure and abiding fame.

But the splendid plan was never carried out. The enthusiasm of the pope cooled; it became harder and harder to get the money needed; and at last Michelangelo, hindered and interrupted until his spirit was chafed beyond endurance, abruptly left Rome and went to Florence. Such independence was by no means to the taste of the haughty Julius, but it took command after command to bring the equally haughty sculptor to terms of reconciliation. When they finally met and renewed their friendship at Bologna it was on a basis that injured the self-respect of neither. But if Michelangelo's pride was soothed he was given little satisfaction in regard to the great tomb. For two years pope and sculptor busied themselves with other matters, and when at length Michelangelo found himself once more in Rome in the spring of 1508, eager to renew the work which had never left his mind, he was only given a new commission, the decoration of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. He did not want to do it. He would infinitely have preferred to work away at the tomb which he had designed three years before, and for which he had already blocked out his "Moses." But the pope's will prevailed. With a sadder, sterner, angrier heart than of old, the painter-sculptor worked sullenly on alone on the high scaffolding, painting with a furious energy that left little time for eating or sleeping. It must have been a sight worth seeing—the stubborn,

proud painter deigning little attention to the fiery, purposeful old pope who employed him, until Julius threatened to throw down scaffold and painter together if the ceiling were not shown him. Then Michelangelo yielded, and bade the workmen remove the timbers and show to the wondering priests and people the half-finished work. As soon as he could he resumed the task with tireless energy, and when it was completed he turned eagerly again to his chisel and marble.

In the year 1513, Pope Julius died, and Leo X., Giovanni de' Medici, son of Lorenzo, reigned in his stead. And you rise from the stone floor of the Sistine and find your way to the rooms decorated for this courtly Florentine man of the world, by Raphael. The fiery soul of the warlike Julius had found something kindred in the mighty, self-willed genius of Michelangelo. He was content to toil away at his projects of diplomacy and war while the artist drew from the marble or threw on the plaster great shapes whose immortal force inspired and exhilarated him. But the son of Lorenzo was less fond of the forceful, the colossal, the spiritually disturbing, and to him the graceful genius of Raphael was infinitely more attractive than the uncontrollable might of Michelangelo. We need not think the less of him for that. After all, the art of Michelangelo even now, as a rule, excites awe and amazed admiration rather than love; it exhilarates far more than it attracts; it is wonderful rather than purely beautiful. And we need not marvel at any one turning from him to the painter whose instinct for loveliness, whose radiant love of all things beautiful, tender, and good have made the name of Raphael—to quote a great critic—the most famous and beloved in modern art.





MADONNA OF THE CHAIR  
Raphael, Pitti Palace, Florence

Raphael was a citizen of Urbino. His chief early teacher was Perugino, who as his name implies, was a citizen of Perugia. Both cities are comparatively small Umbrian towns, of some note and power at times, but without at all the rank and greatness of Florence, Venice, Rome, or even Siena. And as you ponder over these things, you see why these painters whose places of birth and study were the smaller towns of central Italy<sup>1</sup> were more cosmopolitan, less characterized by the hall-mark of any one school—in one sense at any rate—than any of the other great artists of the Renaissance. The Florentines are deeply spiritual; the Venetians are lovers of the splendid; the Central Italians, not dominated by the masterful spirit of republican, ideal-loving Florence, or rich, beauty-loving Venice, could learn of both. And so Coreggio, Perugino, Pinturicchio, Melozzo da Forli, Raphael, and others in a greater or less degree, according to the influence of a great master, the neighborhood of a great city, or the impulses of individual genius, develop beauty and sweetness surpassing Florence, tenderness and spirituality known to few of the Venetians, and a sense of space and landscape—a refreshing spaciousness in their composition—which is quite their own. One might easily suppose, then, that if these painters of soft, lovely faces and forms, devout, tender Madonnas, spacious, gaily colored pageants, and romantic fairyland backgrounds developed among them a really pre-eminent genius he might possibly be supreme, greater even than the painters of Florence and Venice. Such, perhaps, though the superlative in such matters is always unsafe, was Raphael.

So as you stand before the “School of Athens” you

<sup>1</sup> See Betenson’s “Central Italian Painters of the Renaissance.”

really cannot remember any painting you have ever seen so entirely beyond criticism, so absolutely worthy of study in every detail. The stately, gracious forms of Aristotle and Plato and the throng of soldiers, thinkers, and poets grouped about them in this lordly hall—these surely give us humanity at its best. Every foot of the fresco we should wish to remember as we wish to keep in our minds the harmonies of Handel and Wagner, the lines of Shakespeare. And it is so with all of these frescoes.<sup>1</sup> It may be that other paintings will give you more intimate pleasure, for that is a matter of temperament and training, just as some take more pleasure from Wordsworth and Keats than from Browning. Your own greatest joy may be in the fifteenth-century Florentines or the earlier Venetians. But even so you would never dream of saying that the work of Filippino Lippi or Carpaccio is as great as this. Their work is very lovely, and you get from it the joy of innocent, care-free existence, of simple devotion, of withdrawal from the bustling, material side of life. But it is as if you were to compare Scott's romantic novels with the plays of Shakespeare—"The Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens" with "The Tempest." The thing is impossible, of course, but it is quite a sufficiently accurate parallel. Your affection for Scott or for the old ballads may be actually more keen and intimate than for Shakespeare: your responsiveness to Carpaccio more quick and delightful than to Raphael. But if you put aside for the time being your personal temperament, you feel in spite of yourself, as you stand before "The School of Athens," a certain commanding strength and sureness, a hold on the

<sup>1</sup> Students are especially advised to consider the "School of Athens," the "Disputa," the "Incendio del Borgo," and the "Parnassus."

great things of life, a large and joyous view of the world of truth and beauty in all its phases which reminds you of Shakespeare himself. You do not love Carpaccio, Bellini, and the Florentines the less—they show you a phase of life to which you turn with ever-fresh fascination—but Raphael is on a higher, grander plane nevertheless, and breathes that rarer air which, in Italian painting at any rate, is only shared by Giotto, Leonardo, Michelangelo, and perhaps Titian and Tintoretto. And you are not sure that he does not overtop them all.

If it so happens that you were trained a strict Protestant—a fact which is scarcely an aid to your sympathetic understanding of Italian art—it is somewhat a shock to you to realize the new attitude you insensibly assume towards Pope Leo X. He was the pope who excommunicated Luther,—very antichrist to the first Protestants. Yet as you remember Raphael's portrait of him in Florence, and think of him now here in the Vatican, his image does not come to you as that of a devil. His face as Raphael gives it to you is that of a pleasant, well-informed man who enjoyed life to the full, whose mind and tastes were cultivated and refined, and whose heart was quite worldly and probably selfish. He was indeed an interesting type of these closing days of Italy's golden age. He had known Florence in her most brilliant years. His teacher, Poliziano, had been the greatest scholar in Europe, a lyric poet of the first rank, and the closest friend of Lorenzo. The group of men who had given him his boyish ideals had been philosophers, poets, dreamers, painters, to whom in the main Plato was far more interesting than St. Paul. They had not been bad men, and they left the world much that was good. Only they and

their young pupil, this Giovanni de' Medici, made cardinal at fourteen, and elected pope in 1513, not as the saintliest of the candidates, but as the cleverest and best-liked, were practically pagans. While you are studying Raphael, indeed, you look at his master and friend with much tolerance. You feel that you would have much enjoyed a conversation with Pope Leo yourself—possibly more than with so stern a saint as Gregory VII., who could not nearly so well have entered into a modern student's point of view. But you must remember that Luther had not and could not have your twentieth-century willingness to take a man as you find him. You do not seek in Leo, you say, an Augustine or Hildebrand, but a son of Lorenzo and a friend of Raphael. Quite so, but Luther's demand was that the head of the Church should represent in life and word the spirit of the Church's Founder. Leo's worldliness, his love of pagan culture, and his utter indifference to the kingdom of Heaven were to the German's intensely moral and religious nature an abomination. And we have to take both views if we would understand how this splendid edifice of Renaissance culture—so marvelous in its beauty that the world will never let its memory fade—rested on so frail a base of righteousness and soundness of heart that it tottered and fell at the very summit of its glory.

For it came to pass in the year 1527 when another Medicean pope, Clement VII., held the throne of St. Peter, that an army of Germans and Spaniards fell upon Rome at the bidding of the young Emperor Charles V., and when the sack was over, there was left only the ashes of the city's greatness. Of the group of scholars and artists who had known and worked with Raphael and

Michelangelo, and who had seen the new St. Peter's begun by Bramante, some were killed, some imprisoned, some worn out by cruel treatment and privation, some driven mad by the destruction of all they valued, and some sent naked into exile. The Rome of Julius II. and Leo X. had fallen indeed.

But one of the great group survived the sack of Rome and the final enslavement of Florence a few years later. To Michelangelo work was as ever a spiritual necessity, but the restless, fiery genius that demanded outlet through his brush and chisel had to bow to men of the race that had destroyed his city and country. The tyrants who spared his life demanded work from him. Terrible was his response. The tombs in the Medici Chapel, the fresco of the "Last Judgment" in the Sistine,—these are the great artist's mighty protest, his passionate condemnation of the generation that was enslaving Italy and tearing her to pieces. As you stand before that tremendous creation on the end wall of the Chapel, you no longer turn away in astonished revolt from the terrible figure of Christ, huge and threatening, raising one arm with wrathfully swelling muscles, looking down with hard merciless gaze at the writhing forms that shrink away from him and fall shuddering towards the abyss. So might we, had we the power, paint the condemnation of those who destroyed our liberties, killed and tormented the learned, the good, the patriotic, filled our land with misery and mourning, and blotted out all that we held precious. Michelangelo was bidden to paint the last judgment. He did it as in his soul he saw it. And age after age that dread figure with uplifted arm, those whirling forms driven in unspeakable horror from the presence of the Lord, have stood as

a menace and a revelation, silent and yet ever moving and straining on the painted wall.

At the other end of Rome, in a small church not far from the Colosseum, you may see the great statue that was to have been part of the never-finished tomb of Julius II.—the “Moses” over which Michelangelo worked and pondered and chafed for thirty years. It is his masterpiece. If you stand in front of the seated prophet you catch a passionate gleam in his eye, a blaze of wrath that makes you think he is about to leap to his feet and level blasting curses at the apostate Israelites who turn from Jehovah to the golden calf. It is something of the spirit of the “Last Judgment” fresco. But if you stand to one side, out of the direct range of the marble eyes, the face is strong and patient. The wrath you feel will die away. The sin will be condemned and the sinners punished, but the people will repent and be pardoned, and the leader will at last guide his people to the promised land. Perhaps it is the sculptor’s final message. Relentless judgment for the guilty, but hope, infinite need of patience, and then perhaps after weary years freedom again, and for the Italians, too, a promised land.

## CHAPTER IX

### VENICE

To Venice you come, at last, and come, not as the thoughtless tourist, ignominiously by train to the city's back door, but across the lagoon as her sailors and guests used to come in the days of her pride. The Giudecca is on your right, S. Giorgio is before you, the great dome of S. Maria della Salute to your left, and as you pass the custom-house you look beyond it up the wide sweep of the Grand Canal. Right before you are the two great columns, the portico of the republic, and the Palace of the Doges itself with the tops of St. Marks' domes peeping over it. And then in a moment you land within a stone's throw of that lovely building, "most dignified and most fair," which holds so many bright and terrible memories behind its screen of rosy marble. You remember the hard, stern, gray pile of the Palazzo Vecchio of Florence, as you walk beneath the graceful arcades of this public palace of Venice. Florence, with all her fierce republicanism, her alternate fervor of religion and frenzy of debauchery, her exile of patriots, and her defiance of tyrants, you have learned to love for her humanity. To Rome in the majesty of her power and the majesty of her desolation you have bowed down. And now, what of this Sea-queen, this builder of fairy palaces, this city of sunny smile and swift, terrible justice, of the jeweled church, and the quiet, dark, ugly dungeons—this Venice?

In the evil times, when the arm of Rome had become powerless to hold back the hordes of barbarians, and when Goths, Vandals, Franks, and Saxons swept in fierce bands across the frontier into the rich provinces of Europe, there came also a whirlwind of savages who were not Teutons—Asiatic nomads, called by the terrified provincials the Huns. Checked by a defeat in northern France, this deluge—led by Attila, scourge of God—penetrated the Alps and poured down into Italy. Old and wealthy cities were sacked or utterly destroyed, and many of the survivors among the citizens and the country folk, seeking in this collapse of their world some safe place of retreat, came to the shores of the Adriatic. Here the rivers bringing down from the hills, mud, and debris, had formed a great shallow lagoon, protected from the full fury of the sea by long sand-bars or *lidi*, and dotted with low islands. Here then the refugees found safety. The very shallowness of the lagoon made it dangerous for all who did not, by cautious observation and long practice, know its intricate deeper channels. And the new settlers learned soon from Constantinople the art of building a peculiar but most graceful boat of light draught, clumsy and unmanageable in unpracticed hands, but a thing instinct with beauty and swift life when propelled by the skilled arm of the Venetian gondolier.

So in thankfulness and hope the new settlers made the best of their islands, fished and traded for a living, found that this aquatic position gave them peculiar advantages for the coast traffic, and soon awoke to the fact that in wealth and commercial greatness they might become the natural heirs of the storm-swept cities that had once been their homes. In 697 they drew together and elected a doge,

who made the settlement of Heraclea his headquarters. The seat of government was soon shifted to Malamocco, and then after an attack from Charlemagne's son had shown the danger of so exposed a site, the doge's residence was finally fixed at Rivo Alto. There it remained, and there arose in increasing splendor and growing beauty the city which has taken to itself the old name of the whole region. Venetia, the Romans called it; Venezia the Italians call it; to us of the English race it is Venice.

Bit by bit the new city gained the chief place among the trading centers of northeastern Italy. Half on sea and half on land, with the Po and the Adige reaching up into the interior, with the most used passes of the eastern Alps within easy reach, and with a peace, a tradition of stability and security that no other city in Italy possessed, Venice had immense advantages of position that her citizens used to the full. She had kept up her communication, too, with the imperial city of Constantinople. For some centuries, indeed, she was even in nominal subjection to the emperor. And with the control of the Adriatic which came to her in due time, the trade to the Bosphorus and the Levant easily passed into the hands of the Venetian merchants. Her ships, like those of her rival Genoa, carried the Crusaders to Syria, bringing back rich cargoes and much world-wisdom. Holding proudly and scornfully aloof from torn and struggling Italy,—far more interested in the carrying trade of the Adriatic and the East than in anything the land could give her, except consignments of merchandise,—holding out one hand to the East and the other, not to Italy particularly, but to all Europe, and especially the countries north of the Alps, Venice developed, as the centuries passed by, a separate

individuality, a separate civic character, as different from that of Florence, let us say, as Rome from Athens.

Indeed, as you see the liberal-limited monarchy of the earlier centuries, almost a democracy under a freely elected doge, gradually give place to the rule of the merchant princes; as you see these harden into a wealthy and exclusive class, so that the people on the one hand, and the doge on the other, find themselves more and more powerless, their hands more and more firmly tied; as you see Venice thus becoming an oligarchy, the analogy with Rome becomes more and more striking. And “though the associations and the scale of the two were so different, though Rome had its hills and its legions, and Venice its lagoons and its galleys, the long empire of Venice, the heir of Carthage, and predecessor of England on the seas, the great aristocratic republic of a thousand years, is the only empire that has yet matched Rome in length and steadiness of tenure. Brennus and Hannibal were not resisted with greater constancy than Doria and Louis XIII.; and that great aristocracy, long so proud, so high-spirited, so intelligent, so practical, which combined the enterprise and wealth of merchants, the self-devotion of soldiers and gravity of senators, with the uniformity and obedience of a religious order, may compare without shame its Giustiniani, and Zenos, and Morosini with Roman Fabii and Claudi. And Rome could not be more contrasted with Athens than Venice with Italian and contemporary Florence—stability with fitfulness, independence impregnable and secure with a short-lived and troubled liberty; empire meditated and achieved with a course of barren intrigues and quarrels.”

So Venice grew ever more splendid in her pride, her

beauty, and her power, ever victorious, ever expanding in her empire and her trade, interfering in her lordly way in the politics of Italy whenever it suited her to do so, or standing aside in just as lordly indifference. Her citizens, proud of her and adoring her, sacrificed all for her, and cared little that their ancient liberty was gone. Her only rivals, Pisa and Genoa, declined and fell from their high estate. Pisa's greatness ended with her great defeat at Meloria in 1284 at the hands of Genoa. Genoa, in turn, after almost overcoming Venice, was finally defeated by her in 1378, leaving her supreme. Her arms, in unholy alliance with the Crusaders, triumphed over Constantinople herself; her decrees were obeyed in many an older city on the mainland, in Dalmatia, the Ionian Islands, and Crete; as the fifteenth century drew to its close only Rome and Lorenzo's Florence could at all match her in fame, and even they had not her stability, her security, her reputation for greatness, past and present, greatness solid and splendid and certain for the future. "Contemplate," says Taine, "the enterprising life of a free city . . . like this Venice, a borough of fishmongers, planted on mud, without water, without stone, without wood, which conquers the coasts of its own gulf, Constantinople, the Archipelago, the Peloponnesus, and Cyprus, which suppresses seven rebellions in Zara and sixteen rebellions in Crete, which defeats the Dalmatians, the Byzantines, the Sultans of Cairo, and the kings of Hungary, which launches on the Bosphorus flotillas of five hundred sail, which arms squadrons of two hundred galleys, which keeps afloat at one time three thousand vessels, which annually, with four fleets of galleys, unites Trebizond, Alexandria, Tunis, Tangiers, Lisbon, and London, which

finally, creating manufactures, an architecture, a school of painting, and an original society, transforms itself into a magnificent jewel of art, whilst its vessels and its soldiers in Crete and the Morea defend Europe against the last of barbarian invasions.”

Yet power and pride so great were a danger, after all, and the old strength of brain and will and spirit began to be sapped in the sixteenth century,—perhaps even earlier. The Turkish conquests too, the fall of Constantinople and the presence of these warlike savages from the Bosphorus to the Nile, sorely blocked the old trade routes to the East. Before the fifteenth century was done, not only had a Genoese mariner under commission from Spain discovered America, but Portugese sailors had rounded the Cape of Good Hope and found a new road to India that dangerously threatened the supremacy of the Mediterranean. Slowly but surely as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries wore on, the primacy of Venice in the eastern trade gave way to that of Portugal. Her beauty and her fame remained, but her power and wealth left her, and it was only a shadow of the old Venice that yielded up its remnant of independent life to Napoleon in 1797.

And now what of the immortal part of Venice? Her empire and her wealth are only a memory. Her beauty is a possession that can only be taken away when her palaces crumble into the lagoons, and her paintings so fade and perish that Bellini and Titian become empty names.

Here, right at the outset of any study of Venetian art, we need to guard against a misconception. If we look only at painting and at the Renaissance we are apt to say—as many have said—that the artistic life of Venice be-

gan later than at Florence. If, on the other hand, we open our eyes to all the ways in which the sense of beauty in form and color shows itself, such a statement becomes an absurdity. The long contact between Venice and Constantinople kept this one Italian city in touch with all that were left of Greek traditions of workmanship, and with a form of art that was at least akin to painting,—mosaic. The Venetians had in their own sky and sea a training in color. So through the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries arose those marvels of beauty—the Doge's Palace and the Church of St. Mark—glowing with color, adorned with loving care, patterned like no other buildings in Italy and Europe. The lessons for their making came from the East and the North; they are Byzantine and Gothic, so far as you can classify them at all, but they were given a stamp by their builders which makes them in a definite sense simply Venetian. Indeed they are monuments of a genius for form and color in building to which it is not easy to find a parallel in all the rest of Italy.

But these had nothing to do with the Renaissance. The impulse of new life that was transforming the intellectual and artistic life of Italy in the fourteenth century, reviving the forgotten genius of Greece and Rome, and infusing life into dead forms, touched the city of the lagoons at first scarcely at all. Towards the end of the fourteenth century, however, and with the opening of the fifteenth—the century that was to see so great an advancement of learning and art in Florence under the patronage of the Medici—Venice began to see something interesting in the newly developed art of painting. Young artists began to study under Tuscan and Umbrian masters,

and the result was immediate and brilliant. Here, as in architecture, Venice kept her own unmistakable character. These early Venetian paintings are not like the early work of the Florentines or the Sienese. You miss the twisted head, the slanting eyes, the somber colored drapery on a gold background, the stiffness and even ugliness which were the result of a striving for a purely spiritual effect. All of these things were too foreign to the sunny, beauty-loving spirit of Venice to be tolerated there. The first painters preferred to take their inspiration from their own mosaic work and from the bright colors of their city, and their paintings, if they were stiff and crude, with imperfect drawing and perspective, were yet bright and pretty, with a glittering, doll-like prettiness. Here was the beginning of an art that would be like Venice herself,—brilliant, beautiful in form and color, sunny, delightful, and not very spiritual—an art that at its best, when unspoiled, would be pure joy and loveliness incarnate, and that at its weakest would be material, glaring, and sensuous.

There are five great painters that every one who loves Venice and wants to know more of her should try to study, for among them they interpret for us, as far as painting can be an interpretation, the life of Venice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These are Carpaccio, Giovanni Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, and Tintoretto.

Now let me quote a remark of Ruskin's, which is worth thinking about. "Now, John Bellini," he says,<sup>1</sup> "was born in 1423, and Titian in 1480. John Bellini and his brother Gentile, two years older than he, close the line of the sacred painters of Venice. But the most solemn spirit of religious faith animates their works to the last.

<sup>1</sup> "Stones of Venice," chapter I.

There is no religion in any work of Titian's: there is not even the smallest evidence of religious temper or sympathies, either in himself or in those for whom he painted. His larger sacred subjects are merely themes for the exhibition of pictorial rhetoric, composition, and color. . . . Now, this is not merely because John Bellini was a religious man and Titian was not. Titian and Bellini are each true representatives of the school of painters contemporary with them; and the difference in their artistic feeling is a consequence not so much of difference in their own natural characters as in their early education. Bellini was brought up in faith; Titian in formalism. Between the years of their births the vital religion of Venice had expired."

This is surely worth looking into. You stroll into the room of the academy that contains Carpaccio's pictured story of St. Ursula. Here it is all told for you. In an open, airy room a Christian king is receiving a group of heathen British ambassadors who have come to ask the hand of the princess Ursula for their prince, Conon. The embassy being dismissed, the king and the princess are shown gravely discussing the situation, Ursula evidently counting off the pros and cons on her fingers, but finally the suit is granted on two conditions: the prince must become a Christian, and Ursula must be permitted to make an extended pilgrimage, attended by eleven thousand virgins. The prince joyfully consents, and together the two set forth amid a glorious pageant of galleys, with banners and stately groups of lords and ladies backed by Venetian palaces. But alas, in their journey they come to Cologne, to visit the shrine of the Three Kings of the East, and find the city besieged by the Huns. They are warned of

the danger, but they insist on landing. In vain does an angel visit Ursula as she sleeps and tell her of her approaching martyrdom. All untroubled, she rests in her quiet little room, her crown neatly laid on a cushion by the foot of the bed, her slippers disposed at the bedside, and her little dog slumbering near by oblivious of the angelic visitor. On the morrow they land and are cruelly shot to death by the arrows of the Huns. And all through you are in a most delightful world of sunlight and color, and fair ladies and gallant gentlemen, and over all a peace and joy so innocent, so free from sin and care, that even the murderous Huns in the last picture seem to do their deed right courteously, and their victims to receive the arrows with cheerful faces and joyous hearts. So with the same painter's noble "St. George and the Dragon," in S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, where you are quite divided in your good will between the fair knight and the gorgeous monster who so gaily prances there. The grawsome fragments of the dragon's victims do not prejudice you; you are quite sure so admirable a beast must be without real guile, and so fair a world could scarcely, you think, admit of anything very serious in the way of evil.

Now walk into the church, let us say, of S. Zaccaria and stand before a lovely Madonna by John Bellini. Here is not indeed the joyous love of life and color that Carpaccio gives you. It is more earnest and stately, as befits the subject, and perhaps more spiritual, but with the spirituality and the innocence there is no suggestion of a struggle against evil, no scorn of the flesh, no shrinking from earthly beauty. The asceticism and consciousness of the terrible power of the Evil One that you saw constantly in the minds of the Florentines is quite lacking.



ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON  
Carpaccio, in Church of S. Giorgio Maggiore, Venice



Here is a lovely mother with her baby, and at her feet sits a beautiful little angel, serious, but without any sign that the sin and sorrow of the world are weighing on her, meditatively holding a stringed instrument, as if she would play some soft little air on it. The four saints—St. Lucy, St. Catherine, St. Peter, and St. Jerome—stand in thoughtful preoccupation, dignified, graceful, and stately, with not an unworthy line in faces or forms, not a line that would show struggle or self-abasement. A religion is here, based, not on man's consciousness of sin, not on an ascetic hatred of the world or the flesh, but on man's noble striving after the divine, on a love for that lofty earthly grace which is the mirror and type of the pure soul. Carpaccio and Bellini, unlike as they are in temperament and method, are alike the interpreters of a civilization sunny and peaceful, loving law and order and quiet, revering that which is noble and true, gladly bowing to God's Church, delighting in the beauty and the grace and the joyousness of God's world and His creatures.

And now comes Giorgione, loving beauty with even greater fervor, forgetting perhaps a little more easily the deeper or the sadder or the more spiritual side of life. And after him Titian, faultless in drawing, a master in rich harmonious color, majestic in conception, triumphant in execution, but, except in a very few cases, without a hint of that subtle spirit which was all in all to a Florentine and which gave so pure a grace to Carpaccio and Bellini, that hint of a beauty beyond form and color, of a joy not wholly of earth, of the light that never was on sea or land, of that peace of God which the world cannot give and which passeth all understanding. Nothing in Renaissance art is more ethically instructive than the contrast

between, let us say, Filippino Lippi's "Vision of St. Bernard" or Fra Angelico's "Coronation of the Virgin," and Titian's "Assumption," or much more, Paolo Veronese's "Venice Enthroned." One feels that the devotional side of painting was really the very breath of life to the Florentines, or if the generalization should be made broader, that the thing the Florentines chiefly cared about was the serious, human message that was to be conveyed. The message, the spiritual and ethical side of their art was not everything to them, or that art never would have been as great as it was. But it was so much to them that color and beauty were quite subordinated. Of all the Florentines Andrea del Sarto was the only great colorist. Whether one says, then, that their greatness as artists was achieved in spite of their constant preoccupation with their religious message, or whether it is better to say that this grave, ethical tone, sometimes earth-despising and sometimes realistic, but always quiet and in a sense prayerful, is the distinctive charm of their work, the result is the same. No matter how we state it, this attention to *content* rather than to form and color constitutes much of the human interest of the Tuscan painters. One grows to love it and to look for it, and to come before the "Assumption" or the frescoes of the Ducal Palace means at first to the lover of Giotto and Botticelli a distinct shock. They seem material, voluptuous, beside the quiet, lovable men and women and angels of the Uffizi. Yet one should not class the "Assumption" with Veronese's frescoes. Indeed, one cannot long do Titian real injustice, or refuse to him the homage due to one of the greatest painters who ever lived. If he has not the spirituality, the subtle fascination of Botticelli, there is in him an over-





### ANGEL

Detail from Belini's Maestà and Saints, in the Church of S. Zaccaria, Venice.

powering sense of mastery, of splendor, of rich beauty that none of the Florentines could claim for a moment. The "Assumption" itself has an impressiveness, a lofty beauty that never can be forgotten. And even if we miss in him any deep sense of the divine in life one can scarcely say that the sense of idealism is quite gone; his majestic St. Christopher, and the exquisite figure of the Virgin in the "Presentation" would alone make us hesitate to say anything so sweeping. But in Tintoretto, marvelous painter as he was, and in Paolo Veronese, realism has definitely supplanted idealism; boldness of conception, skill in execution, glorious mastery of color, have taken the place once for all of the simplicity, the moral health, the heavenly striving of the earlier masters.<sup>1</sup>

From the simplicity, the faith in God, the joy in humanity, of Carpaccio and Bellini, to the gorgeous draperies, the luxury, the pride of wealth, the splendid worldliness of Paolo Veronese, such was the deeply significant movement of Venetian art during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. And with this dying out of the spiritual in art, there were flitting away from Venice the sources of her wealth and power. As the line of great painters ended and gave place to workmen to whom art was good drawing, rich and splendid coloring, effective composition, faultless perspective, and these alone, the heart of Venice was growing cold, her brain and will were losing their force, and the sea on which she had earned her supremacy was ceasing

<sup>1</sup> A fragment from a letter of Sir Edward Burne-Jones to a friend visiting Venice is worth quoting. "Of all things do go to the little chapel of S. Giorgio di Schiavoni, where the Carpaccios are. The tiniest church that ever was, like a very small London drawing-room—but with pictures!!! And whenever you see Carpaccio give him my love, and whenever you see Bellini give him my adoration, for none is like him—John, that is, for his brother I only respect," "Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones," Vol. II., p. 334. John Bellini's brother Gentile was not at all his equal, though he had the same charm of simplicity and sincerity.

to be the chief highway of the East. The spirit of the great city was dying with her faith as the scepter passed away from her. The doge could look sadly out from the balcony of the great council hall, and no more see the lagoon splendid with galleys bearing the wealth of the East to the entrance of the Grand Canal. And the great jeweled Church looked down on a city whose faith and whose strength were gone, whose splendid beauty still unfaded hid the speedy coming of death.

"Not in the wantonness of wealth, not in vain ministry to the desire of the eyes or the pride of life, were those marbles hewn into transparent strength, and those arches arrayed in the colors of the iris. There is a message written in the dyes of them that once was written in blood; and a sound in the echoes of their vaults that one day shall fill the vault of heaven, 'He shall return to do judgment and justice.' The strength of Venice was given her so long as she remembered this; her destruction found her when she had forgotten this; and it found her irrevocably because she forgot it without excuse. . . . The sins of Venice, whether in her palace or in her piazza, were done with the Bible at her right hand. The walls on which its testimony was written were separated but by a few inches of marble from those which guarded the secrets of her councils or confined the victims of her policy. And when, in her last hours, she threw off all shame and all restraint, and the great square of the city became filled with the madness of the whole earth, be it remembered how much her sin was greater because it was done in the face of the House of God, burning with the letters of his Law. Mountebank and masquer laughed their laugh and went

their way; and a silence has followed them not unforetold; for amidst them all, through century after century of gathering vanity and festering guilt, that white dome of St. Mark's has uttered in the dead ear of Venice, 'Know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.'"<sup>1</sup>

It is near the close of a lovely afternoon in June. You have been in the great church of the Frari, steeping yourself in the loveliness of Bellini's altar-piece and Titian's wonderful "Madonna of the Pesaro Family." As the light began to fail you, you left the dim church and walked meditatively down towards the Grand Canal. You are in the mood for an aimless ramble, and you are just tired enough to welcome the cushioned seat of a gondola. Just the gondolier you want is waiting for you at the *traghetto*,<sup>2</sup> ferocious of aspect, gayly attired in white, and adorned with flowing blue sash and tie, altogether a fit man for your mood, and an oarsman, as you know well, of tireless strength and fine instinct for discoveries. You give him the easy instruction to go where he pleases, and off you glide with that exquisite swimming motion that nothing but the canoe can equal and even the canoe cannot surpass, across the wide reach of the Grand Canal and into one of the exquisite little canals that are among the chief beauties of Venice. Past dark doors, past little boats moored idly, past garden walls overhung by vines and graceful branches you swing along with a gentle rock and a soft swish, until you are conscious of a familiar landmark ahead. It is the Bridge of Sighs. In a moment

<sup>1</sup> "Stones of Venice," II., chapter IV.

<sup>2</sup> An ancient and famous term in Venice. To the casual traveler the word simply means a gondola landing, but the more accurate meaning may be found with a most interesting discussion of the whole gondola system in Horatio Brown's "Life on the Lagoons."

you pass the rear of St. Mark's and of the Ducal Palace, see the Bridge poised for a second above you as you glide darkly along between palace and prison, and then in a stroke you are out on the lagoon. You turn just for a moment to glance back on that marvelous work of old Venice, to delight once more in the dainty arcades, the stately columns by the Mole, and—as you pass the line of the Piazzetta—the corner that you can see of the great church; you catch from your gondola a flash of innumerable wings as a cloud of pigeons sweeps down and out of sight into the Piazza, and then with a long look down the magnificent reach of the Grand Canal, you settle back with a sigh at the exceeding goodness of it all.

Your gondolier is evidently aiming for the Giudecca. With easy strokes he carries you past the Custom House, past Santa Maria della Salute, and across the Canal of the Giudecca toward the Redentore. Then a few little turns and you go more slowly along by the abodes of sailors and fishermen. It is a fairly wide canal lined with boats of all kinds. The beams of the low sun glance from behind you and light with level rays the gaunt masts and tangled cordage, the yellow sails, the black hulls, the bright sun-burned faces, and as you turn in delight and look back it seems to you that nowhere else in the world could you get such entrancing effects of light and shade and rich color. It is purely Venetian. Yet no palaces are here, and few of these bronzed men and women could tell you much of Dandolo or Marino Faliero, of Shylock or Othello, even though many of them are the descendants of warriors who fought the Genoese at Chioggia and helped to storm Constantinople. You pass barges full of busy workers, and see huge baskets half sunk in the



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water. You point in astonishment to a little green crab painfully climbing the side of a basket and your good-natured pilot swings you in for a moment beside one of the boats. The floor of it is a foot deep with crawling green crabs, and you are informed that they make good eating. Your quite unreasonable gesture of horror is taken in good part. They doubtless realize something of foreign prejudices; and you somewhat hastily move away as they try to contribute to your education in Venetian customs by offering you a toothsome, squirming little morsel. But if you hesitate to touch the crab you have no ill will toward the smiling fisherman or his company. Indeed, so unaffectedly happy are they all that you catch the infection and beam radiantly at the whole canal with its baskets and barges and picturesque sounds and sights and its rich evening colors. All is good and most beautiful.

With a quieter, longer stroke, your gondola glides out upon the lagoon again, this time on the side away from the city. The sun is near setting. Out towards the Lido the black form of a gondola is silhouetted in the clear air against the reflected glow of the sunset. No other life is visible, and you look away out over the quiet water towards the Adriatic, your heart full of the loveliness in which—taken all in all—Venice and her lagoons reign supreme. Your gondolier knows it, too, familiar as it is to him, and you hear with quick sympathy his murmur, "Molta bella!"—"most beautiful!" Here again the ages fade away. The terrors of war, the burdens of conquest and empire, the generations of pride and glory, of stern tyranny balanced by greatness and stability, the long decay, the bitterness of Napoleon's robberies and the

surrender to Austria, the three-score years and ten of Austrian rule, and then the glad triumph of a better freedom than the old—all these pass before you in a moment's vision. And over and above all that is selfish and cruel in the whole wonderful story there sinks into you now as the day wanes the marvel of this jeweled city, built on marshy islets, lifted from these muddy lagoons, raised in strength and beauty by "iron hands and patient hearts" to be one of the famous spots of the whole earth. Your last words of it cannot be Ruskin's stern words of judgment. Few cities have brought forth for our encouragement so many generations of stout-hearted citizens. Few cities have done their part in the world's work so manfully. Only two at most have left the world so brilliant a flowering of beauty. So for good work and for beauty, for palaces and for fisher's huts, for St. Mark's and for the painters, for sun and color and swift gondola, for all that is Venice, let the world ever give thanks.

## CHAPTER X

### MILAN

From a lovely nook on a hillside by beautiful Lake Como you are looking away off towards Milan and the south. You will soon be in Piedmont, and then you are to turn north to Switzerland and say farewell to Italy. Here where the air is fresh and where the green leaves and the lake give you only a lovely present world, nothing to study, you look back reflectively. It seems a long time since you landed in Naples and began these Italian wanderings. Days, weeks, months have been unlike the same periods of time at home; they have held so much for you that perspective has been destroyed, and the multiplicity of sights and studies has tended to blind you somewhat to the total. The trees have hid the forest. There have been times when the glory of Venice has obscured the more spiritual beauty of Florence; when the dread visions of Dante overshadowed the merry jests and romances of Boccaccio; when the fascination of the hill-towns and the beauty of unexpected byways swept away the somber memory of narrow, hot stone streets and forbidding palace walls; when it seemed hard to draw back and see all of them together as Italy—all Italy—Rome, Lombardy, Venice, Naples, and all the varied moods of a racial genius which in succeeding ages could bring forth Caesar and Fra Angelico, Virgil and Pope Julius, Hildebrand and Fra Lippo.

Yet this effort you must make. This handsome, ruddy, unkempt youth who is climbing the road near you might have served in the legions of Marius. That monk that you were talking to this morning might have been a Gregory the Great, a Fra Bartolommeo, a companion of Savonarola. The restless, vigorous old man whom you met the other day in the Ambrosian Library in Milan might be Petrarch incarnate once more, and his rubicund, bright-eyed companion might be Boccaccio. All alike were Italians and fellow-countrymen, all alike illustrate the amazing genius of a people so many-sided in their achievements that unless we bethink ourselves we make the stories of Rome, of the Papacy, of the Renaissance, and of the later days of Mazzini and Cavour as if they were accounts of different peoples. Yet beyond the infusion of Lombard and Norman and Ostrogothic blood—perhaps some Visigothic and Frankish too—the Italian race is now what it was two thousand years ago, and this freshening of the stock by other races has certainly not changed its identity. The people led by Cavour and Garibaldi to liberty and union were the people who saw the domes of St. Peter's and Santa Maria del Fiore rise at the bidding of Michelangelo and Brunelleschi, who sprang at one another's throats in the conflicts of Guelfs and Ghibellines, who fought the Germans under Germanicus, the Britons under Agricola, and the Gauls under Cæsar, who applauded the festivals of blood in the Circus Maximus, and who humbled the pride of Carthage. Ancestors of Venetians, Pisans, Florentines, and Piedmontese served in the galleys of Pompey and the legions of Trajan. And one must see Italy as Italy—Rome, Florence, Lombardy, if you like, but over all and through

all one Italian race and genius—if one would see each city, each age, each achievement, in its true setting.

It is perhaps easiest to do this in Rome. There one may see the Colosseum from a trolley-car that passes along the Via Cavour, and then in a moment ascend a tunneled slope beneath a palace of the Borgias to see in the Church of S. Pietro in Vincoli the “Moses” of Michelangelo. Gradually, but quite inevitably, one is forced to the conviction that the city of the Emperors, of the Popes, of the Renaissance, and of the Liberation is really the same city moved in different ages by different motives; that a municipal proclamation signed by Colonna—descendant of Petrarch’s friends—should be expected, not marvelled at; and that to erect in Rome of all places a dividing wall between ancient, medieval, and modern history is the surest of ways in which to falsify the truth and make the living past a dead jumble of names. What is true of Rome is true of all Italy. It is natural that we should make a halo about those ages and cities that have brought forth great men and heroic deeds. And it is natural that the distinctive characteristics of an epoch or a state should blind us to the essential unity of a great race’s development. But two thousand years ago Tuscans, Venetians, and Latins were all Romans; now they are all Italians. The contemporaries of Cicero saw no more glory about his head than we see about the head of Mazzini. The mob that cheered Mark Antony was doubtless very like a mob that might gather in the streets of modern Rome.

One might almost imagine sometimes that there might be some who would reverently take the Forum, the Colosseum, and the Temple of Vesta and place them in a

museum, mounted and labelled, where the dust and roar of vulgar traffic would not defile or profane them. But the columns that stood unmoved amid the babel and the tumults of ancient Rome cannot be greatly disturbed by the noise of to-day. Why should the ancient be sacred and the modern defiling? It is all Rome. Here in a villa you may step from reliefs carved in A.D. 51 or 52 to celebrate victories in Britain, to Canova's statue of Pauline Borghese, sister of Napoleon I., and then you may go upstairs to see masterpieces of Titian, Correggio, and Andrea del Sarto. In this city, if anywhere in Italy, you may expect to see monuments of the first century and the nineteenth, of Venice, Florence, or Parma. With all her intense individuality Rome is not and never was tied to one bit of ground or to one age, and sooner or later she will teach every earnest student the lesson that Italy's history is not to be cut ruthlessly into three or four parts. It is less easy to keep this large horizon in your mind's eye in Florence or Venice. But the lesson has been brought back almost with a shock in the great Lombard city of Milan.

It is not long since you crossed the long bridge from Venice to the mainland, left the lagoons behind you, and headed for Lombardy. You reached Milan early enough to take a stroll through the streets and to get a first look at the Cathedral, but your first really accurate impressions were not formed until the next morning. Even before your arrival you had formed the stern resolve to climb the tower, untaught by experiences of the Leaning Tower, the Campanile of Giotto, and the monuments at Bunker Hill and Washington. But all such determinations disappeared for the time as you walked about the huge

church and entered it. It is not that it is more beautiful than other churches. You were not lost in a delight that was keen and personal as at Siena or before St. Mark's. You were not braced and chastened and inspired as by Cologne or by one of the great Norman churches of England. But you were lost in a marvel, in a bewilderment that quite overwhelmed you, as you gazed at the dazzling pile of white marble, swarming with its thousands of statues, carrying your eye up to pinnacle after pinnacle, until it reached the tiny tower overtopping all. And the marvel continued when you entered. Here was a forest of immense columns, not bearing a heavy roof upon their broad tops, but soaring up with a divine airiness that seemed rather to lift the whole edifice lightly up towards heaven. In one long sweep each pillar carried your eye from floor to roof, and the roof itself was cunningly carved in the semblance of foliage, so that the great church became one tremendous stone forest, gray and silent, as if the German builders had taken the beloved woods of their home land and bidden them stand there petrified, majestic and eternal, to the glory of God. Perhaps you would tire of it soon. Perhaps the mixed, ornate, not quite genuine architecture of it might trouble you in time. But for the present it was all wonderful and glorious to you, and you bowed before it in amazement and reverence.

Then you bethought you of the dome and tower. You climbed to the roof and stood delighted by the flying buttresses, in the midst of the myriad statues.<sup>1</sup> This much was surely worth while. But then you toiled on

<sup>1</sup>There are over two thousand statues and ninety-eight turrets, all of marble. The tower is three hundred and sixty feet above the pavement.

higher, until at last with numb muscles and disgusted spirit you stood on the little top platform. Away below you was the roof. Farther below walked tiny men by toy carriages and horses. In the distance was a faint blue line behind which you knew rose the Alps. But after all, it was just like a map done in relief. All perspective was gone, all detail lost in the distance, and when you began to descend your thoughts regarding ascent and view were not those of unmixed self-congratulation.

Your remaining strength you spent that morning in an aimless walk through busy streets. What a far cry from this to Naples, even from this to Florence! In Milan you were no longer in quaint old half-medieval Italy, but in a modern city, the most modern that you had seen since you left the shores of America. The streets might have been German, English, even American. The common, familiar characteristics stamped by modern commercial and industrial life on all that it can reach were here in truth, and it was hard to realize that you were within the walls of the great Lombard city that defied Barbarossa, the city of Gian Galeazzo Visconti and Ludovico Sforza. You wondered, half-regretfully, whether all Italy would one day be assimilated to this new busy industrial life, whether the subtle old flavor of days departed would cease to linger over the walls and pavements and crooked ways of Perugia and Assisi and Fiesole, perchance even of Naples and Amalfi.

Once upon a time the burghers of Milan were mightily stirred by dread tidings—tidings that told of Barbarossa himself coming with all his mailed host of German knights and men-at-arms to declare his rule over Lombardy and all Italy. It was the second visit of the great emperor. His first, four years before, had witnessed his coronation

by the English pope, Adrian IV., but it had been closed hurriedly, and not wholly triumphantly, by the combined pressure of the Roman fever and the tumultuous Roman populace. Since then he had been too busily occupied in the pacification of Germany to renew his efforts—so important to the imperial dignity—to thoroughly secure the subjugation of Italy. Now, however, all was well in the north. “There was such unwonted peace there that men seemed changed, the land a different one, the very heaven had become milder and softer.” At the great diet of Besançon, says the good chronicler Ragewin, “all the earth was filled with admiration for the clemency and justice of the emperor, and moved both by love and fear all strove to overwhelm him with novel praises and new honors.” So with a mind at ease and a stout heart Frederick in this summer of 1158 crossed the Alps and demanded the homage of the Lombards.

Some of the cities yielded willingly enough, notably Pavia, Lodi, Como, and Cremona. If there was much jealousy of the Germans as foreigners there was also a strong traditional sentiment of loyalty to the Roman emperor,<sup>1</sup> no matter what his blood, and this latter feeling justified and strengthened in many cases a conviction that the emperor was bound to win, and that to those that supported him would be honor and much profit. But some held back, chief among them our stately Milan, and against this greatest city of all Lombardy Frederick marched with all his legions, a hundred thousand armed men *“vel amplius.”* Whoso looked upon this mighty array, opines the German chronicler, might at last clearly understand the

<sup>1</sup> See Bryce's brilliant essay on “The Holy Roman Empire.” The details here are chiefly from the chronicles of Ragewin and Otto of Freising, modified by some of the Italian narratives contained in Muratori's *“Scriptores.”*

words, “Beautiful as the moon, splendid as the sun, terrible as an army with banners.” Well might the restless and rebellious city quail as the northern host sat down before its walls and prepared for a siege. But the war between city and emperor was not yet to the death. A few fierce assaults, a few weeks of hard fighting distinguished chiefly by the savage cruelty of the Cremonese and the Pavians towards the Milanese and *vice versa*—a hatred marvelous and disgusting to the Germans—and then before autumn came the citizens sued for peace. It was granted readily enough. Complete submission was insisted upon, but the terms were on the whole easy ones. All the men of the city marched out with bare feet and humble vesture carrying their unsheathed swords while the emperor, receiving their oath of allegiance with placid countenance—as became one who was still “*divus Augustus*” to a Christian historian—expressed his joy that God had moved so fair a city and so great a people to prefer peace rather than war.

So the clash of war ceased on the fair plains of Lombardy, and now Frederick called together all the notables of north Italy in a great diet at Roncaglia. “Here,” to paraphrase an old hexameter narrative, “was a plain, green and fertile, where the Roman king when he visited the cities of Liguria was accustomed to hold his court. Hither, therefore, the emperor, wishing to hold an assembly according to ancient custom, betook himself, and called together the great chiefs of the Ligurians with the wise men also by whose learning he was wont to revise the laws and settle innumerable strifes. Now then did he set forth a new law, that all the peoples of his empire should submit to a perpetual treaty of peace, obeying his

decrees. None should violate, none make fierce trial of battle, and cunning fraud and brutal rapine should pass away. So did men live in olden times, rejoicing to lead a heavenly life on earth, so that it has been called the golden age of the world.” But alas for this dawn of perpetual peace! Learned doctors might set forth the doctrines of imperial absolutism. Obsequious lawyers might report that all the governing powers of the cities, all the tolls and taxes, all rights of navigation, the powers of the podestas, the consuls and judges, belonged to the imperial government; that persons elected to these dignities by the citizens should receive the same as a gift from the hand of the emperor, and should lay them aside only with his consent. A grave archbishop might even quote the maxim, *what is pleasing to the prince has the force of law*, and declare that whatsoever the emperor by letter or decree commanded thereby became law.<sup>1</sup> And yet after all the chiefs and lawyers had so mightily pleased the emperor and themselves with their legal researches and wise dicta, the contumacious city of Milan indignantly rejected the diet’s decisions, expelled the imperial legates, and took up arms again with fierce resolve to fight the matter out.

But if Milan was stirred to anger so also was Frederick. There followed bitter war and a terrible three years’ siege. Bravely indeed fought the Milanese. But one by one their allies fell before the great power of the emperor. Piacenza was leveled to the ground; Mantua and other cities were sacked and burned; and at last the proud city

<sup>1</sup> It is odd that while all contemporary chroniclers alike, German and Italian, speak of the Diet of Roncaglia, only the Germans set forth in detail these reports of the lawyers in support of the imperial power. The Italian historians are silent or use vague terms.

came to the end of her resources, and bowed to her conqueror. Then "unable to prevail against the anger of Cæsar and the weight of the Empire, Milan, proud city as she was, head of Liguria and flower of all Italy, showed in the completeness of her overthrow how perilous it was to strive against the onset of a flood, how insane not to yield to supreme majesty." No mercy was shown this time. The humbled city was surrounded. The men of Lodi were assigned to one gate, the men of Cremona to another, of Como to another, and so with the other Italian cities that hated their proud rival and clustered now to aid in her annihilation. First all the houses were burned, then the buildings, the towers, the city gates, and many of the churches. For a time one great campanile stood in the midst of the ruin, marvelous in beauty and height, the like of which was seen nowhere else in Italy. But then this too was torn down, and the pride of Milan seemed shattered forever. All the cities of the region came to aid in her destruction. Almost all Lombardy labored at the leveling of her walls and trenches. More was destroyed in a few days, wrote the imperial notary Burchardus to a friend in Germany, than one would have supposed could be destroyed in two months, and every day added to the ruin and desolation.

But the end was not yet. The cities of Lombardy found that in destroying their rival they had destroyed their stoutest champion. The quiet after the storm lasted little more than a year or two. Then four strong cities rose against the podestas who ruled them in the name of the emperor, and formed a league. They were backed by Venice, now Frederick's declared enemy. The very men who had destroyed Milan helped to rebuild her, and her

people drifted back to their old homes. Once more the queen city of Lombardy arose in her old pride and power, this time head of a Lombard league including even Lodi and all the towns of the northern plain. When Frederick came down to Rome in 1168 and saw his army decimated again by the Roman fever, his unruly vassals blocked the approach to the Alpine passes so that the wrathful prince had to return to Germany by a toilsome and roundabout way. Alexandria was built by the league as an outpost city, protecting the highroad from Milan to Genoa, so that all was ready when the emperor came once more with a great host to crush once for all the insolent independence of the Lombard towns. Burghers and emperor met on the field of Legnano.<sup>1</sup> Again, as of old, the stubborn Milanese were the backbone of the Italian host, and this time the Italians overcame the Germans as in bygone days their ancestors under Marius had overcome the barbaric forefathers of Barbarossa and his knights. The reconciliation of the humbled emperor with the pope next year at Venice, and not many years later the Peace of Constance, closed this most famous episode in the story of Milan. For a time almost single-handed, then at the head of a great league, she had fought, suffered, and conquered in the cause of *Italy for Italians*.

Happy had it been for Italy if the victory had brought also unity, national dignity, freedom from petty, suicidal dissensions, but it was not so to be. "Weary of unceasing and useless contests," says the stately Hallam,<sup>2</sup> "in which ruin fell with an alternate but equal hand upon either party, liberty withdrew from a people who dis-

<sup>1</sup> Fought in May, 1176.

<sup>2</sup> "Middle Ages," Chap. III., Part II.

graced her name; and the tumultuous, the brave, the intractable Lombards became eager to submit themselves to a master, and patient under the heaviest oppression. Before the middle of the fourteenth century, at the latest, all those cities which had spurned at the faintest mark of submission to the emperors, lost even the recollection of self-government, and were bequeathed, like an undoubted patrimony, among the children of their new lords. Such is the progress of usurpation; and such the vengeance that heaven reserves for those who waste in license and faction its first of social blessings, liberty.” Milan was one of the first to forget her struggle for independence, and a century after Legnano accepted the lordship of the Visconti. After the Visconti came the great house of Sforza. From hand to hand passed the fallen queen of north Italy, until in our own day blazed forth once more the old spirit that had quelled Barbarossa, when in the five days of March, 1848, the Milanese drove from her streets and gates the troops of Austria. A new age was dawning then after long sleep—sleep which as far as liberty was concerned had lasted nearly six centuries.

Yet in those long ages of forgotten independence the material and artistic life of the city went on unchecked, and as you wandered about the city in this new age of union and happy freedom, you felt that the genius of Milan could never have been really dead. The energy once spent in fighting the great emperor did not die away. It only turned into other lines, and the people who chafed and growled at the tyranny of Visconti or Sforza still fought and traded and toiled as they made their city more wealthy and more famous with each generation, proud of her great name, and perhaps half trusting that some time

the spirit of old times would come back to her and nerve the arms and hearts of her citizens to bold deeds. Gallantly indeed did she fulfil her destiny when the time came in '48 and in '59, when Piedmont came down from her hills like a strong youth to awaken with war cry and sword-stroke the ancient dreams and deeds of Lombardy and Tuscany. Good blood may flow sluggishly or congeal. Seldom does it turn to water.

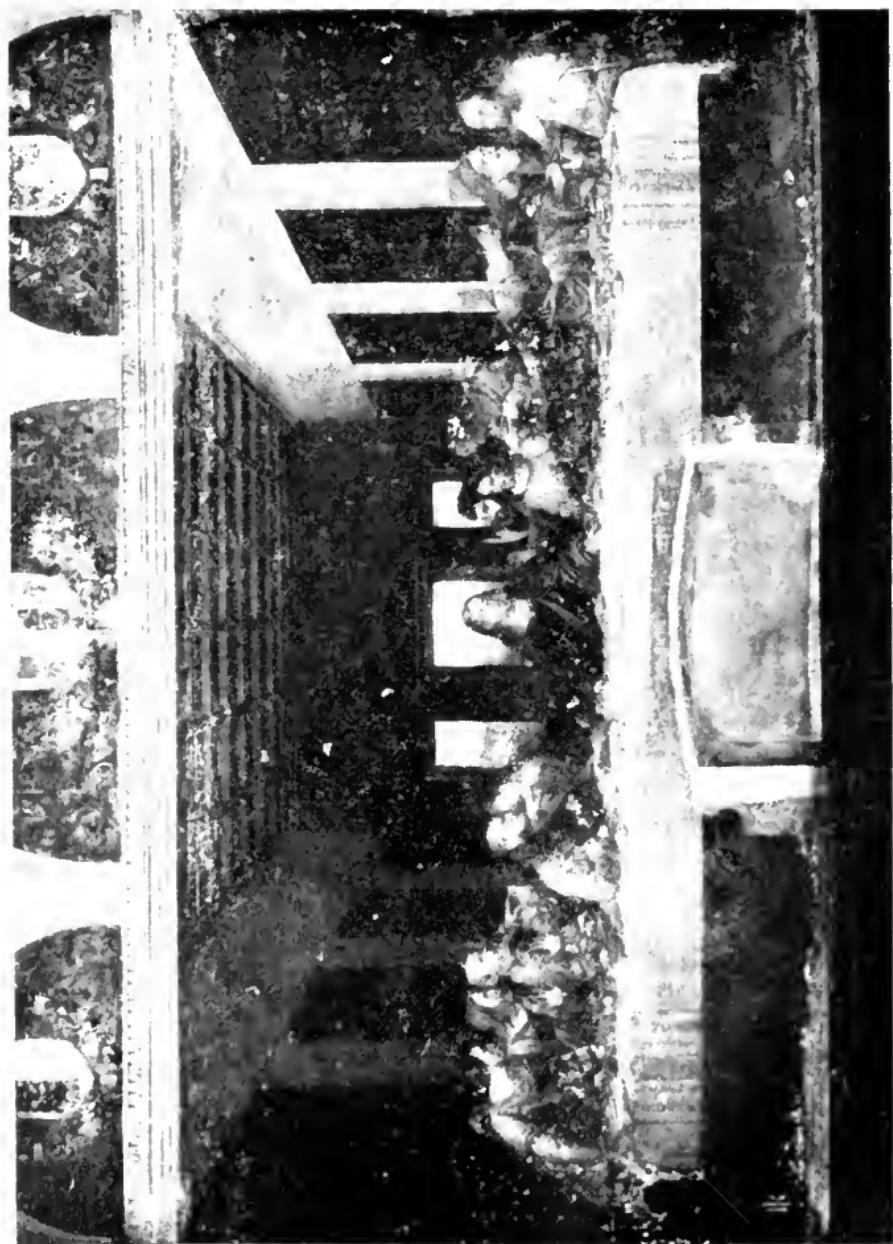
One great name is inseparably associated with Milan, that of Leonardo da Vinci. Here he spent nearly twenty years, in the service of that least admirable of tyrants, Lodovico Sforza, and here he did his most famous piece of work. If you could have seen only one thing in all Milan you know well how little doubt would have entered your mind as to what that should be. In the old refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie, in pathetic and irreparable ruin, you may still see one of the three or four world-masterpieces of painting. "The artist," says Goethe, "represents the peaceful little band round the sacred table as thunder-struck by the Master's words, 'One of you shall betray me.' They have been pronounced; the whole company is in dismay, while he himself bows his head with downcast eyes. His whole attitude, the motion of his arms and hands, all seem to repeat with heavenly resignations, and his silence to confirm, the mournful words, 'It cannot be otherwise. One of you shall betray me.'" It was painted in oils on the plaster. It is not a fresco. And so, while other paintings, done even earlier than this "Last Supper," on scores of walls throughout Italy are surviving in perfect beauty, this, one of the greatest of them all, is decaying and passing to inevitable ruin. Indeed, it scarcely lasted in perfection fifty years. Re-

painted again and again since 1499, even the added colors have faded, and now it is all a mere faded outline. Nothing can stay the disaster. One can only photograph or copy, and of the alternatives, perhaps the photograph is usually preferable. There are copies by skilled painters in the room with the original, supposedly to assist the student in the interpretation of Leonardo's work. And yet you turn from copy to original in quite unaffected irritation. The original is blotched and disfigured indeed, terribly so, but somehow even to your inexpert eyes there is a power and majesty in the ruined forms and faces beside which the copies look cheap and ordinary. There is quite enough left to assist one's imagination,<sup>1</sup> and as you pore over it, and try to think yourself back into the mind of the painter, the outlines and colors come faintly back, the face of the Saviour is filled with its old dignity, its old pathos, its old divine humanity, and you look indeed at the "Last Supper" of our Lord. After all, no other portrayal of the subject can compare with it, ruined as it is. Andrea's is second, and Andrea's is a very great painting. Yet the gap between them is wide, and you are left with the melancholy certainty that in the space of only a few years one of the greatest paintings of all time will have ceased to be.<sup>2</sup>

There is no more cosmopolitan, less provincial, city in Italy than Milan, unless it be Rome herself,—none that seems quite so naturally to have adjusted its conditions

<sup>1</sup>The imagination is not, in this case, left quite to itself. The drawings of Leonardo may render any student familiar with his style, and the sketch of the head of Christ in the "Brera" at Milan aids greatly in the appreciation and reconstruction of the painting.

<sup>2</sup>Of Leonardo's paintings "La Gioconda," called also "Monna Lisa," and the "Madonna of the Rocks," both in the Louvre, may be most safely commended to students. Copies of the drawings may be found in Richter's "Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci." Walter Pater's essay on Leonardo in his "Renaissance" is worth reading.



TITLE: LAST SUPPER  
ARTIST: Vincenzo Viti Refector of S. Maria delle Grazie, Milan  
DATE: c. 1594



and appearance to the customs and requirements of a city in the modern sense of the word. Siena is Sienese, Florence is Florentine, Venice is Venetian, Naples is Neapolitan, but Milan is simply Italian. In spite of yourself you think in Assisi of St. Francis, in Florence of Dante and Lorenzo, for in and through the buzz of modern life and the glare of modern things breathes an echo of older times that you cannot escape from. A trolley-car doubtless carries you through the streets of Florence, but it lands you beside Giotto's tower, or within a stone's throw of the Bargello, where you may tread steps that Dante trod. You may buy picture post-cards in Assisi, but you cannot lift your eyes without seeing the Church of St. Francis, or the old castle on the mountain-top, or the dome in the plain that shelters the Portiuncola. And in each city it is the older, not the newer, life that you think of and see. But in Milan the modern life has swept quite over the ancient and medieval. Once the most obstinate and independent of city states, it is now simply a thriving and wealthy member of the great commonwealth of Italy. The old days of the Lombard league and the strife with Barbarossa are quite gone, and even the great Cathedral, with its infinitely labored adornment, its stuccoed pillars, gives to the world not the message of a mighty generation or a surpassing genius, not the message of St. Mark's, of the Duomo of Siena, or Giotto's Campanile, but that of Galeazzo Visconti the tyrant, of Napoleon the conqueror, and of ruler after ruler, architect after architect, from the fourteenth century to the twentieth.

So the great memories of the twelfth century are memories only. Milan never quite did for Lombardy what Florence did for Tuscany. Her compensation has

been that her very lack of distinctive character, her willing eclecticism, her readiness to adapt herself to each succeeding age and fortune, has made her now the most modern, the most thoroughly alive city in the whole of Italy. She, too, then, has her contribution to the new life of her new country. Not that of Florence or Venice, but one just as necessary—vitality, nervous energy, adaptability, and joyous willingness to accept modern conditions. So may she still be a great city, proud of her memories of Legnano and Leonardo, and still prouder, doubtless, of the five days of 1848. Yet after you have rejoiced in her wealth and life and up-to-date ways, you may be glad—since after all you are still in Italy—to step into the quiet rooms of the Ambrosian Library, or into the refectory where hangs in ruined majesty the “Last Supper.” Then again as in Assisi or Rome the centuries flit away, and you hear faintly the shouts of Barbarossa’s army, or the murmured talk of Duke Ludovico and Leonardo as they stand before the new masterpiece.

## CHAPTER XI

### FROM TURIN TO ROME. THE REGENERATION OF ITALY

Two cities stand out before all others in the minds of those who have watched the growth of modern Italy,—one, the oldest in story of all, and the greatest in achievement,—the other known to the world scarcely at all until recently, and now known simply as the capital of the little state that has united Italy, the city of Victor Emmanuel. To see the Piedmontese themselves, and to know them, we ought to stand in the great Piazza Castello in Turin as we have stood in the Piazza S. Pietro in Rome, the Piazza S. Marco in Venice. Or better still, we should journey slowly through, say, the glorious valley of Aosta, and visit the homes of those who have been paving Piedmont's way to greatness here on the mountain slopes, living healthy, sturdy lives, biding their time until their noble House of Savoy should lead them to great deeds.

But since Turin is not so much a city of memories as of recent achievements, we shall change our point of view a little. We shall leave the city by the Po, ride off until even the great dome of the Superga<sup>1</sup> fades in the distance or is hidden by the hills, and on a mountain slope from which we may in vision overlook the whole plain and see even to stately Milan and the fertile fields of Lombardy, we shall survey the events of the last hundred years, the awakening of Italy; and we shall find our horizon widen-

<sup>1</sup> The great burial church of the house of Savoy.

ing, too, towards the south, until Sicily and Naples come into view again, and then Rome herself. For if Italy's story begins, in a sense, when you first see the city on the Tiber emerging in some clear shape from the mists of the far past, if it is true that in each phase of the growth and change of the Italian race the scepter sooner or later has come to Rome, then we may well think of the genius of that race taking a new breath and looking forward to a new era, when the princes of Savoy take their abode on the Quirinal, and when the ashes of an Italian king are laid to rest in the Pantheon.

The peninsula of Italy is, one may suppose, the most romantic and picturesque part of Europe in its wealth of associations. And yet if you had said as much to a patriotic Italian one hundred years ago, instead of acknowledging your compliment with pride he would have given you but a dreary answer: "What matters a glorious past," he might have said, "when there is no present and no future. Italy is dead." And indeed it seemed so. Long after the nineteenth century was well under way the Austrian chancellor Metternich was able to say with every appearance of truth that Italy was only a geographical expression. She had no national life, had known no unity even under a despotic ruler, no unity of any type, for more than a thousand years. Even Germany had more promise of unity than had Italy. There was at least the *idea* of unity in eighteenth-century Germany, and though the separation of state from state was bad enough there, more complicated indeed in its subdivision than in Italy, yet even Bavaria and Prussia were not so deeply—one would almost say irreparably—divided as Florence was from

Rome, Piedmont from Lombardy, Venice from Naples. Italy contained eleven political divisions which had not been united under one sovereignty for twelve hundred years. If you had asked a Venetian to consider the great past of his country he might indeed have reflected with pride on the past of Venice, but not of Italy. Italy was not his country. Venice had been founded, had risen in centuries of toil and trade to be one of the first maritime and commercial states in the world, had gradually declined, and was finally delivered over by Napoleon to the hands of Austria without ever once in her thousand years of history forming part of a united Italy. She had developed her own peculiar form of civilization; so had Florence, so had Rome, so had Naples and Sicily. The traditions of each were as different from those of the other cities of Italy as those of London are from Paris and Berlin. The barriers between them seemed to go so far and so deeply into the past ages that any unity of life and aim seemed absurd. Yet we have seen them overcome and Italy united during the last hundred years, chiefly by the genius, courage, and constancy of four men,—Mazzini, Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel, and Cavour.

The shock of a revolution was needed first, though. In 1789 there was no spirit in Italy and there were no leaders who could ever carry through a practical movement for liberation. Southern and central Italy were hopelessly degraded and spiritless after centuries of oppressive rule. And even the north was still almost medieval in its lack of culture, its antiquated laws, its superstition, its widespread poverty and disease, its complete disregard of sanitation and cleanliness, and its lack

of any national spirit. The king of Naples<sup>1</sup> misruled south Italy and Sicily. The pope was temporal lord of Rome and the center as well as spiritual head of the Catholic world. Just north of the papal dominions came the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the smaller duchies of Lucca, Modena, and Parma. Then further north still were the two old republics of Genoa and Venice, the kingdom of Sardinia,<sup>2</sup> and the plains of Lombardy, ruled by Austria. In not one of these was there evident even the germ of national life. Tuscany and Lombardy were doubtless the most enlightened and the best governed, but in neither was the thought of free political action tolerated for a moment.

Into this group of antiquated, dust-covered principalities and powers, in which the government of Florence (where Leopold reigned, brother of Marie Antoinette) was the only one that at all reflected the new intellectual restlessness of the time, came like a thunderbolt the shock of the French Revolution. Napoleon's first independent command was in Italy, where in 1796-97, he led the armies of the new republic against Austria. In swift succession every despot in Italy was swept from his throne. Republics arose under the protection of France in Naples, Rome, and Lombardy, and the bewildered people of Italy had to awaken to a new point of view with the entrance into their political vocabulary of the three words, liberty, equality, and fraternity. But the French republican general became an emperor, and the Italian republics that he had raised

<sup>1</sup> More properly, king of the Two Sicilies. Often in the older histories Sicily is called Trinacria, and south Italy Sicilia, so that the realm of the king whose capital was at Naples might be called the Two Sicilies.

<sup>2</sup> With its capital at Turin in Piedmont. In these pages Piedmont and Sardinia will be interchangeable terms to describe the kingdom of Charles Albert and Victor Emanuel.

into life were changed into kingdoms,—not the old ones, but new ones, with Napoleon himself as king of one and his brother-in-law, Murat, of another. Then Waterloo came. Napoleon went to St. Helena. The powers he had raised up vanished, and the old princes came back to their thrones. Only a few changes were made. Genoa was annexed now to the kingdom of Sardinia. Venice was given to Austria. Austria more than ever dominated all the states of Italy, and the revolutionary period seemed now doubtless to the returning princes and the absolutist statesmen like an evil dream of change and turmoil that was happily over. But it was no dream. The revolution had been most real, and the Italians had been taught lessons as to the instability of thrones, the benefits of good government, the fascination of liberty, and the possibilities of unity that could never be wholly forgotten—however obscured they might be by the exhaustion of the people after the disturbed period since 1796. The first phase of the liberation of Italy had come and gone. Italy had been shaken out of her sleep, and had been given by the great Italian emperor of the French a glimpse of a dawn, that might indeed be lost for a time in black clouds, but would surely in time break into the full light of a new day.

Now came the period which has been aptly called the Thirty Years' Peace, extending from 1815, the year of Waterloo, to 1848, the great year of revolutions. If you find your way through a period by the aid chiefly of wars and treaties and convulsions it is a hard thirty-three years to keep track of, for it was a time of singularly little outward change. One spasm did break the quiet,—the revolution of 1830,—but it was quickly over, and the

occasional riots and rebellions in Italy or Hungary or Poland that now and then seemed likely to disturb the peace of Europe were stamped out quickly and thoroughly. But if we look beneath the surface we shall see that these little quickly suppressed commotions were the bubbles of a steady and persistent seething underneath. All those minds—and they numbered many thousands—which had been stirred into restless life by the revolutionary era were busy conning over the new ideals and casting about for some practical way of realizing them. At the same time the practical statesmen who were seeking to reduce things to order after the turmoil of the revolution—who looked upon liberty as the dangerous watchword of anarchy and rebellion, the tiresome idol of fanatics—were for their part making it their sole business to govern, to repress agitation, and to strengthen the thrones that had been so sorely shaken.

These two hostile groups had each their great representative during this thirty years' peace. The incarnation of the old ideas, the great statesman of expiring absolutism,—the stern, unyielding supporter of law and order as he understood the phrase, and the crushing and powerful enemy of liberty, was Prince Metternich, chancellor of the Austrian empire. With Russia and Prussia as his allies, and the princes of Italy almost his subjects, Metternich was able to stand as the chief exponent of absolute power through a great part of Europe from 1815 to 1848. In Italy Austria was practically all-powerful. Metternich's eye and arm seemed to penetrate into every corner. Every word or action that might portend even possible agitation or opposition meant some one's instant arrest and condemnation to years of imprisonment in some

lonely fortress in Austria, Hungary, or Bohemia. Metternich then was the practical embodiment of the statecraft and power of the old system.

But opposed to Metternich was a figure which stood out in singular contrast to him. Prince as he was, backed by the emperor of Austria, and feared by all Europe, the powerful chancellor was troubled by a shabbily clad, care-worn exile who wandered about Europe under the ban of governments, finding at last indeed his only safe refuge in England, hard put to it sometimes to know where his next meal was coming from, with the bondage of Italy burning into his soul, and with the vitality of genius radiating light and energy from him into every part of Europe. Poor and weak as Giuseppe Mazzini was, his devotion and his genius made him a match for Metternich himself, an apostle and leader of the winning side in the great struggle between freedom and tyranny.

Mazzini<sup>1</sup> was born in Genoa, June 22, 1805. That is to say, he grew to boyhood and manhood in the latter days of Napoleon's régime and the years immediately following Waterloo. His father and his mother were cultured, capable people, both keenly interested in the tremendous political movements of their time, and both Liberals. So the boy learned the first principles of democracy from his parents, and these home lessons were illustrated and strengthened by the constant undertone of political discussion that he heard about him from the time when words began to mean anything to his childish ears, —talk of the great Revolution, of the doings of Napoleon,

<sup>1</sup> See Bolton King's "Mazzini" and "History of Italian Unity," Thaver's "Dawn of Italian Independence," Stillman's "Union of Italy," and the Countess Cesaresco's "Liberation of Italy." This last is probably the best account of the whole movement in a single volume.

of the fitful rise and disappearance of the Italian republics, of the disappointments that had come, of the loss of Genoese independence, and of the prospects for the future. Even his lessons in Greek and Latin, telling him of the great city republics of ancient times, taught him lessons as to the blessings of liberty and the hatefulness of tyranny. So it was natural as he grew to years of responsibility that he should face with growing anxiety the situation in Italy. The state of affairs was very bad—as bad as it well could be. But what could be done! What could possibly relieve his down-trodden, degraded fellow-countrymen from the gigantic power of Austria! Only education, and patient, persistent agitation leading to a national revolt at some time in the future,—and towards this end Mazzini directed his efforts with increasing clearness of vision and certainty of conviction. He joined the society of the Carbonari, the only revolutionary organization that he could find, and for a time worked faithfully in its ranks. But he was dissatisfied with the results. It seemed to him that this great international secret society was too mysterious, too cosmopolitan, too subtle, and devious in its methods to ever excite a really national enthusiasm for the cause of Italy. And it was too conservative, too cautious and slow moving for the impatient young Genoese, who so ardently yearned for the dawning of the new age of liberty and unity.

He was arrested for his suspected share in a Carbonari conspiracy, and six months of enforced quiet were given him in the fortress of Savona. Here he went over the whole situation in his mind. The more he thought of it the more decidedly did he turn away from the Carbonari as the possible regenerators of Italy. He

decided there in the prison to found a new society which should be purely national, which should be simple and clear in its aims, and which should adopt an aggressive and vigorous plan of campaign. The leaders of the Carbonari were, perhaps, too old, too experienced in disappointments and failures to have the full revolutionary dash and enterprise, so Mazzini resolved to call his society "Young Italy," and to accept no member who was over forty years of age. There in the Savona cell "Young Italy" was born, then, and when Mazzini was released for lack of evidence and because of his youth, he quickly began to gather in members. The new society caught the people's fancy at once. To make Italy *one, free, and republican*—this was the simple, threefold aim of the enthusiastic band of young men who gathered about their silver-tongued leader, and "Young Italy" soon numbered its tens of thousands.

Mazzini himself was soon exiled. He had to wander about for a time, hunted and unsettled, but after a year or two he drifted to London. A foggy, dismal place it seemed after the bright beauty of the Riviera, and yet friends were quickly made—the Carlyles among others—and by degrees the kindness of kindred souls, the goodness of heart in people who sympathized openly with the cause that the exile so loved, made the great city a second home which became very dear to him. Here he worked on steadily for the liberation of Italy. Letters and pamphlets unceasingly crossed the channel. Month by month and year by year liberals throughout Europe, but especially in Italy, found themselves looking with increasing eagerness for any new word from this prophet of the burning heart, the restless, vigorous brain, and the magic

pen. The leaders who were still permitted to work in Italy, or who visited their country at their own peril, kept constant communication with their great leader. Conspiracies were formed, detected, and broken; revolts were begun and crushed; brave men were shot or hanged or spirited away to lifelong imprisonment. Yet still new plans were formed and new patriots came forward to take the places of the fallen and lost, and still the messages of hope and inspiration from Mazzini came to cheer and stimulate and gather new recruits for the host of "Young Italy." His faith never wavered, no matter how dull and spiritless his people seemed: no matter how invincible and cruel their oppressors. Love of country was a religion to him now, and he sought to make it so to others. "That old name of Italy, hung round with memories and glory and majestic griefs that centuries of mute servitude could not destroy" was indeed a new name to most Italians, and it needed more elevation of spirit than most of them possessed to see his "vision of their country, radiant, purified by suffering, moving as an angel of light among the nations that thought her dead." Yet he worked on without despair. "I see the people pass before my eyes," he wrote, "in the livery of wretchedness and political subjection, ragged and hungry, painfully gathering the crumbs that wealth tosses insultingly to it, or lost and wandering in riot and the intoxication of a brutish, angry, savage joy; and I remember that those brutalized faces bear the finger-print of God, the mark of the same mission as our own. I lift myself to the vision of the future, and behold the people rising in its majesty, brothers in one faith, one bond of equality and love, one ideal of citizen virtue that ever grows in beauty and

might; the people of the future, unspoiled by luxury, ungoaded by wretchedness, awed by the consciousness of its rights and duties. And in the presence of that vision my heart beats with anguish for the present and glorying for the future.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1848 seemed to come the beginning of the realization of at least part of Mazzini’s dream. A sudden flame of revolt in the south shocked the king of Naples into a reluctant grant of a constitution to his people. This was in January, and it was the beginning of a wave of revolution. On February 7th Charles Albert granted a constitution to Piedmont. Before the month was over came the news of a great revolution in Paris and of the assembly at Mannheim demanding a free parliament for Germany. The liberal Pope Pius IX. inaugurated a system of reform in Rome. The flame reached Lombardy, when the Milanese expelled the Austrians in five terrible days of street fighting, and the dukes fled in panic from Tuscany, Modena, Parma, and Lucca, leaving their states in the hands of provisional governments. The whole fabric of absolutism seemed to be staggering to its fall. From Vienna came the great news of risings in March which compelled Metternich himself to flee for his life. More riots came in May; the emperor had to leave his capital; Hungary and Bohemia rose in national revolts; and the tearing apart of Austria, that stronghold of despotism, that stern power which had so long held down the popular aspirations of the Italians, seemed imminent, indeed almost accomplished. What if the pope’s heart failed him, so that he left Rome and joined the king of Naples at Gaeta! The Romans, in no wise disheartened,

<sup>1</sup> Bolton King’s “Mazzini,” p. 28.

organized a republic, and guided and inspired by Mazzini himself, prepared to make good their claim of independence. Charles Albert, stirred by the enthusiasm of his people, placed Sardinia at the head of an Italian rising against the power of Austria. Indeed, it appeared that he had for years been awaiting this opportunity. He had said once to a good Liberal who brought to him reports of the hopes and dreams of patriots all over Italy: "Let those gentlemen know that for the present they must remain quiet; but when the time comes, let them be certain my life, the lives of my sons, my arms, my treasures—all shall be freely spent in the Italian cause."<sup>1</sup> Now the promise was to be redeemed.

But the end was not yet. One likes to pass quickly over these two years, 1848-49. It is never pleasant, and it is not always profitable to dwell upon disaster. Mazzini and Charles Albert had reckoned too hopefully on that most inscrutable and unreliable of forces—*the people*. Mazzini's vision of a united and free Italy was so real and sacred to him that it was inconceivable to him that the millions of his fellow-countrymen should not feel the same passion of patriotism that burned in his own heart. And Charles Albert never dreamed but that the enthusiastic Tuscans and Romans and Neapolitans who urged him to lead in a national war would bring strong legions of brave fighters from the center and south to support the gallant army of Piedmont. There was no intentional deceit; just the inevitable abyss between the optimism and enthusiasm of the few and the indifference and inertia of the many. Italy was not yet fully awakened or adjusted to the idea of a real national rising. And it is equally true that she

<sup>1</sup> Godkin, "Life of Victor Emmanuel II.," p. 22.

had not yet found her leader. Mazzini was prophet and teacher, but no statesman; Charles Albert was an honest man, a patriot, and a brave soldier, but he was no general. Against the subtle diplomatists, the veteran generals, the disciplined battalions of Austria, poor Italy had little chance. A victory won by the king in May at Goito was followed by a crushing defeat at the hands of the Austrian marshal Radetski at Custoza, July 25th. A truce tied the hands of the combatants until the following spring, and then on the woeful field of Novara the cause of Italy suffered so crushing a reverse that no resurrection seemed possible. Rome, heroically defended for nine weeks by Garibaldi and his brave companions against France<sup>1</sup> as well as Austria, fell in July. Venice surrendered in August, after five short months of liberty and independence. Italy was enslaved again, and the chains seemed tighter and surer than ever.

Nothing could have fallen more heavily on the hearts of Mazzini and his sanguine followers than the utter failure of so brave an effort to combine all Italians in a national struggle. And the gallant Piedmontese, who had borne the brunt of the war, the Milanese who had fought so bravely and exulted so triumphantly and prematurely found it hard to reconcile themselves to the weight of the disaster. But the brave men who had fallen on each hard-fought field of that sad year had not died in vain. They were martyrs for Italy, and they left a memory which nerved their comrades and their sons to emulation and final victory. "Deeming that the punishment of their

<sup>1</sup> Louis Napoleon, later Napoleon III., was now president of the French Republic. Whether to renew the tradition of the old kings—"eldest sons of the church"—or to secure the favor of the Catholics of France, in view of his designs on French liberty, he declared that he could not permit the overthrow by the Romans of the pope's authority.

enemies was sweeter than wealth or the pleasures of life or the hope of these, and that they could fall in no nobler cause, they determined at the hazard of their lives to be honorably avenged, and to leave the rest. They resigned to hope their unknown chance of happiness; but in the face of death they resolved to rely upon themselves alone. And when the moment came they were minded to resist and suffer, rather than to fly and save their lives; they ran away from the word of dishonor, but on the battle-field their feet stood fast, and in an instant, at the height of their fortune, they passed away from the scene, not of their fear, but of their glory.”<sup>1</sup>

But even on the day of Novara the defeat was followed, if men could have seen it, by an omen of better days to come. For then Charles Albert, broken in heart and spirit, gave up his crown to his eldest son, and the gallant prince who had been the soul of the Piedmontese attack and resistance in the fight now took up the hard task that his father laid down, and became king of Sardinia, Victor Emmanuel II. Victor Emmanuel! There was courage and hope in the name itself surely, but there was little inclination in the sad group of patriots to see hope in a name. The times were too sadly out of joint, and too much good blood had been shed at Custoza and Novara.

Yet in truth the darkest hour was past when the summer of 1849 reached its close. The new king had not the record of vacillation which would have hampered his father. Taking up the heavy task of retrieving the fortunes of Piedmont with a brave heart and a strong will, holding to the promise of a constitution without a doubt or

<sup>1</sup> “Thucydides” (Jowett’s translation), Book 11.

a regret, Victor Emmanuel concluded peace with Austria and came back to Turin, knowing well what lay before him and prepared to face his destiny. Piedmont must no longer be an absolutist, medieval state; 1848 had closed one era and opened another; the constitution meant representation, representation meant popular government, and popular government meant adjustment to the ideas and practices of the progressive states of the west—the British Empire, the United States, and France. So the king summoned a representative parliament, called to his assistance a group of capable ministers, and set to work to remodel the institutions of Sardinia. It was not quite the Augean stable that Naples was, but there was much to be done, and Piedmont was far from unanimous in its attitude to the future.

Indeed, a task had soon to be entered upon that awakened a powerful and bitter enemy. Six hundred years before, the practice had been universal in Europe to try the persons and suits of churchmen before the ecclesiastical courts. And not only churchmen, but all who were in any way dependent on the Church, all Crusaders, all widows and orphans, could take their causes to the bishop rather than to the civil judge. Before the ecclesiastical court were brought all cases affecting wills and testaments or alms to the Church. Certain churches possessed the privilege of sanctuary, and might be a refuge to those pursued by the officers of the law. Education was controlled by the Church, in fact was almost a monopoly of the Church, so that few but clerks or monks could read at all. And the power thus confided in the Church in the Middle Ages was undoubtedly for the good of Europe. But as the age of confusion passed away, as

peace came in greater measure to the distracted states of the West, as higher ideals became more possible and more universal, and as governments became less and less mere powerful central forces quelling with a strong hand all powers opposed to them, the idea of administrative unity became both clearer and more possible of realization, and in England the church courts had lost most of their usefulness and power before the Middle Ages can be said to have closed. The famous conflict between Henry II. and Thomas à Becket turned on this very issue. And this quarrel of twelfth-century England had to be fought out in nineteenth-century Italy, with Victor Emmanuel bravely but all unwillingly taking the part of the great Angevin. But the fierceness of Henry and the bitterness which led finally to the archbishop's murder were far from the heart of the Italian; his opposition to the Church was begun and maintained in sorrow and anxious desire for reconciliation; his persistence in reform, in the abolition of the church courts, in the nationalization of education, in the removal of laws against heretics, was due only to a severe sense of public duty; and his victory was unaccompanied with triumph or any feeling but one of satisfaction at duty done, and regret for his enforced alienation from the Church that he loved. Pius IX. remained proof against the king's earnest protests of fidelity, and the breach with the Church became in time even wider.

In 1850 there entered the cabinet the man who was to do perhaps more than any other one individual towards making Italy united and free—Count Camillo Cavour.<sup>1</sup> He was a younger son of a noble Piedmontese house.

<sup>1</sup> See Countess Cesaresco's "Cavour" in the Foreign Statesmen series. This, with the bibliography in Bolton King's "Italian Unity," will sufficiently direct the student to further material.

He had received a good education, and had traveled widely in Europe, but his family was not wealthy and his own portion was a meager one. So it was suggested that he should benefit the family and increase his own income by becoming manager of the ancestral estates. Into the business and agricultural sides of his new occupation he threw himself with energy and success; his fields and villages became models of wise management and progressive methods; and long before he became a politician he was one of the wisest, most progressive, and most valuable citizens of Piedmont. As his estates came to need less of his time he turned the spare energy thus set free into journalism, vigorously advocating the cause of all-round reform. He became in the new parliament one of the ablest and soundest speakers. There was probably not a man in Piedmont so well informed, by actual contact, as to the conditions of industry, commerce, agriculture, and public feeling. When the ministry of agriculture became vacant in 1850, it was natural enough that the portfolio should be given to Cavour, and in 1852 he became prime minister. From that time his name is inseparably associated with every step that was taken towards the aggrandizement of Piedmont and the liberation of Italy.

In these early fifties the first duty of the Piedmontese government was still to place the country on a firm foundation industrially and commercially, and to adjust its institutions to its new status as a liberal, self-governing state. Before it could lead Italy again in a national war it must recover its spent strength and stand on a firm financial basis. Before it could form a healthy nucleus for a free Italy it must try to educate its citizens and learn by practice what intelligent liberty meant. So to these arduous

tasks Cavour chiefly bent himself. But he never lost sight of the cause in which Charles Albert had spent the last year of his reign, and for which Victor Emmanuel as Duke of Savoy had fought so gallantly and vainly. He had faith in Italy as deep as Mazzini's, and he had also what Mazzini lacked, a clear perception of the means which alone could make the liberation of Italy possible.

In 1854 Sardinia joined France and Great Britain in the Crimean War. Cavour and the king were bitterly criticized for wasting the country's slender resources in a frivolous alliance, but the wise men who were guiding Piedmont to her great destiny knew their business. The troops under La Marmora fought bravely and well. They earned the respect and good will of their French and English comrades. When the Congress of the Powers met at Paris to arrange the terms of the peace in 1856, Cavour himself represented Sardinia, and sat at the same board as his national arch-enemy, the representative of Austria. Moreover, before the plenipotentiaries separated, Cavour, who had won the favor of the representatives of France and England, begged permission to lay the state of Italy before the Congress. In a calm and cogent statement he brought forward an indictment against Austria, which might excite the violent wrath of the Austrian plenipotentiary indeed, but which rang from end to end of western Europe, and secured at once for the Italian cause the backing of that subtle and powerful spiritual force—the public opinion of the civilized world. Piedmont had then re-established herself; she had secured the respect and friendly regard of Europe; she had won for herself sympathy, and had aroused for her oppressor a distinct attitude of unfriendly criticism. So much was good.

And now all was ready for the next step. Cavour believed firmly, to the horror and discouragement of Mazzini, that Italy would need the help of a great power against Austria. England was impossible; Prussia was more impossible; France might have been deemed equally so had France not been ruled by the semi-Italian Napoleon III. The personality of this strange human puzzle was Cavour's hope. He set himself to the task of arousing all the emperor's old regard for Italy, and of awakening in him all the old traditional French jealousy of Austria. He pointed to the insidious advance of Austrian power in Italy, to the danger of an Austrian attack on Piedmont—an attack which Piedmont could not hope to resist alone, but whose success would leave Austria supreme from the Alps to Sicily.

Napoleon was aroused. Cavour received the promise that if *Austria were to attack Piedmont, France would go to the rescue*. And there remained the task of so ordering things that the required condition should be fulfilled. It is seldom difficult to provoke an attack if one earnestly sets about it. Piedmont fortified positions whose fortification could have no meaning except in the event of a war with Austria; she steadily pushed on war preparations of all kinds; she did and said exasperating things, while maintaining the most scrupulous external politeness; in short, she went so close to actual insult and declaration of hostile intent that at last Austria's anger and nervousness were too much for her. In April, 1859, came the ultimatum which ended the long strain for Cavour and enabled him to claim Napoleon's promise. The miracle was realized. Once more France crossed the Alps. Once more a Bonaparte crossed swords with Austria in Lombardy. On the fields

of Magenta and Solferino were won the two greatest victories that the French arms have achieved since the great Napoleon, and Lombardy was freed at last. The Italian patriots hoped for Venice, too. The emperor had promised to free Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic. But even though his heart now failed him, though his treaty with Austria at Villafranca left Venice still in the hands of her oppressors,<sup>1</sup> though the disappointed rage of the Italians pursued him with execrations instead of blessings, yet Cavour and the king well knew how much they owed to the emperor. Before the end of 1859 not only Lombardy, but Lucca, Modena, Parma, and Tuscany owned the rule of Victor Emmanuel. No one could now declare that a united Italy was impossible.

To one brave soldier the peace of Villafranca came as a peculiarly heavy disappointment. Giuseppe Garibaldi, exiled in 1834, had drifted off to South America, had joined himself there to all causes that reminded him of the cause he loved at home, had fought for liberty—or what seemed to him liberty—with a lion-like courage, an impetuous abandon, a single-minded devotion to high ideals, a warmth of heart and an incapacity for corruption that had won for him the enthusiastic love of a little band of followers and great fame as an irregular fighter. The revolution year, 1848, had brought him home, only to be in time for the disasters of the fall and winter, and for the heroic defense of Rome in the summer of 1849. The outbreak of the great war of 1859 found him settled on the little island of Caprera, near the coast of Sardinia,

<sup>1</sup> Oppressors only in a sentimental, national sense, be it understood. Apart from forbidding political action or agitation, Austria ruled her Italian provinces mildly and fairly well. Naples suffered from tyranny far more than Milan.

where he was patiently awaiting an opportunity to strike another blow for *Italia una e libera*, and in that war he did effective service in command of a body of irregular troops styled "Hunters of the Alps." To his ardent nature the full dawning of Italian freedom was at hand. And the measure of his confident expectation was the measure of his bitter disappointment. Only the personal command of his beloved king made him lay down his arms, and he retired dejected to Caprera, only to fume and storm over the crimes and blunders—as they seemed—of others.<sup>1</sup>

But pregnant rumors reached him as that winter neared its close—rumors of a stirring of the waters in Sicily. Only a leader was needed there, it was said, to bring about a revolution. Garibaldi was tempted—hesitated—then decided on the great venture. He had able lieutenants. Arms were secured and arrangements perfected with the utmost secrecy. And then, on the evening of May 5, 1860, two small steamers slipped out of the harbor of Genoa with a thousand red-shirted men on board, bound no one knew whither. Before two weeks had passed Europe was being electrified with astonishing news. The famous guerrilla chief had landed in Sicily, had defeated a detachment of Neapolitan troops, and was marching on Palermo. Like a thunderbolt the red-shirted heroes fell on the Sicilian capital, captured it, held it against a terrific bombardment, and finally forced the royal general to a treaty, leaving Garibaldi the control of the island. He was proclaimed dictator of Sicily. But this was not enough. He crossed to the mainland, marched north, entered Naples, and there, too, was pro-

<sup>1</sup> See Garibaldi's "Autobiography." There is a capital account of this most picturesque "maker of Italy" in Thayer's "Throne Makers."

claimed dictator. Whereupon Victor Emmanuel had to take a hand, and the King of North Italy marched south to receive from his loyal friend and subject the gift of a kingdom. The two joined forces to capture Gaeta, the last stronghold of the defeated king of the Two Sicilies. So Victor Emmanuel was king now of South and North. There remained only Rome and Venice.

The story is nearly told. Cavour died in the summer of 1861, all too soon for Italy. But his successors endeavored to hold to his ideals, and to use his methods. In 1866 Prussia fought her duel with Austria for supremacy in Germany. Austria's danger was Italy's opportunity, and Victor Emmanuel became the willing and useful ally of King William. The issue was decided on the field of Königgrätz (Sadowa) and Italy's reward was Venice. Rome was still guarded by a French garrison. Napoleon III. still declared himself the firm protector of the pope. But in 1870 came the Franco-Prussian War. The terrible series of defeats during the summer of that year culminated in Sedan. With the capture of the emperor by the Prussians ended the Second Empire, and with Napoleon's fall ended the French guarantee of the temporal power of the pope. The departure of the French garrison left the Vatican powerless. The little army of Pius IX. was soon overcome, and Rome itself was added to the kingdom of Italy, now united under one sceptre for the first time since Theodoric the Ostrogoth had reigned in the Eternal City thirteen centuries ago and more.

Italy was united at last, and free. What the united Italian race may now look forward to, no man knows. That the destiny of that wonderful people will be a worthy

one, few can doubt. For eight centuries the Italians were the first people of the civilized world, conquering and ruling all Europe south of the Danube and west of the Rhine, Asia to the Euphrates and Africa north of the Great Desert. For eight more centuries the Roman world was busily conquering its conquerors and rising in new forms of life from the ashes of the Empire. It was the age of Gregory the Great, of Hildebrand, of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa. Then came the century of Francis and Dante, then the tide of the Renaissance, reaching its full flood in the age of Lorenzo, Raphael, and Titian, then at the end of the sixteenth century the first perceptible lapse in the energy and fruitfulness of the Italian race during two thousand years. Was it exhausted then? Not so. At the end of the eighteenth century the man who caught the force of the French Revolution, harnessed it, and used it to conquer Europe, was a pure-blood Italian, as true a type of the vigor of the race as Sulla or Columbus. And then came Italy's nineteenth-century prophet, Mazzini, her knight-errant, Garibaldi, her statesman, Cavour, her sturdy king, Victor Emmanuel, and the miracle of the liberation of Italy! Let it not be said that so great a race can decay now at the moment when it is at last free and united. Rather may the New Italy combine the genius and fulfil the destiny of all her immortal cities, and be still *Italy the undying.*



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